

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

ZONE

MIDLANDS EDITION

APRIL 2016
ISSUE 228

YEARS & YEARS
ON TOUR IN THE MIDLANDS

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YOUR 2016 WINNERS
REVEALED

**THE
FAMILY
ISSUE**

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO
KNOW ABOUT STARTING A
FAMILY AS AN LGBT PARENT

OUT
THE ESSENTIAL
NIGHTLIFE +
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GROOMING
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WHAT'S ON**

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BIRMINGHAM
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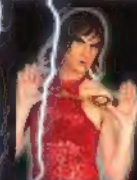
8PM **KARAOKE WITH JOEYOKE**

11PM **WILMA FINGADOO**

1AM **DJ CILLA**

FREE ENTRY b4 11PM | £3 b4 1AM | £5 AFTER

£2.50
DRINKS
2PM - 10PM



OPEN 2PM - 6AM **//// SUNDAY 1st MAY**
BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND PARTY

8PM **KARAOKE WITH JOEYOKE**

11PM **DRAG WITH NO NAME**

1AM **DJ CILLA**

FREE ENTRY b4 11PM | £3 b4 1AM | £5 AFTER

£2.50
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It's the annual
Family Issue 18



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Offices:
Wynner House,
Bromsgrove St,
Birmingham B5 6RG
and
13-14 Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury, SY2 6AE

Get connected...  @midlandszone

 fb.com/midlandszone

Editor-in-Chief & Publisher: **Martin Monahan** Editor: **Ryan Humphreys** ryan@midlandszone.co.uk 01743 281722
Sales & Marketing: **Lel Woodhouse** lel@midlandszone.co.uk 01743 281703 **Chris Horton** chris.horton@midlandszone.co.uk 01743 281704
Admin/ Subscriptions: **Adrian Parker** adrian.parker@midlandszone.co.uk 01743 281714 Managing Director: **Davina Evans**
Graphic Designers: **Lisa Wassell** **Chris Atherton** Accounts Administrator: **Julia Perry** julia@whatsonlive.co.uk 01743 281717

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Pop legends to rock Birmingham Pride in 20th year

Organisers of Birmingham Pride have announced that '80s and '90s legends Andy Bell (of Erasure fame) and Grammy-nominated singer Lisa Stansfield will headline this year's event alongside chart-topping artists Katy B, MNEK and Fleur East.

This year taking place for the 20th time (over the Spring Bank Holiday Weekend of Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May), Birmingham Pride is the UK's largest two-day gay festival, last year attracting more than 50,000 party revellers.

Pride's Festival Director, **Lawrence Barton**, commented: "As one of the largest Gay Pride events in the UK, we're absolutely delighted to have pulled out all the stops with such a fantastic line-up for our 20th year - and there are more artists still to announce.

"We're truly thrilled to be presenting such a diverse range of fantastic chart-topping legends. We're expecting a record turnout, attracting people from throughout the UK. And, with over 100 artists and DJs performing during the weekend, there's definitely something for everyone to enjoy."

Erasure's lead singer **Andy Bell** will be performing a host of the band's hits, including the chart-topping *A Little Respect*, while **Lisa Stansfield** will perform - among other popular songs - her 1989 global number one, *All Around The World*. Both artists appear on Sunday 29 May.

Leading hip-hop urban artist **Katy B**, who previously stormed Pride in 2014, returns to headline the event on Saturday 28 May.

The festival also features current leading chart artists **DJ Fresh**, **Karen Harding**, **99 Souls** and **Anne-Marie**.



Erasure's
Andy Bell



Lisa Stansfield



Katy B

Other performers confirmed to appear include '90s chart-toppers **Vengaboys** and former *X Factor* artists **Lucy Spraggan** and Birmingham's very own **Mason Noise**.

Pride 2016's other attractions include a dance arena, a cabaret marquee, a funfair and a women's arena, in addition to a host of community stalls and refreshments.

This year's Carnival Parade sets off from Vic-

toria Square at midday on Saturday 28 May and is taking *A Generation Of Pride* as its theme, to coincide with the event's 20th year.

Advance Discounted Tickets for the festival, which will take place in Birmingham's Gay Village, are available online from www.birminghampride.com.

#Pride20

Government drug advisors: Poppers may not become illegal after all

The Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs has intervened in the row about the legality of poppers, stating that they may not be criminalised after all, as they aren't psychoactive.

LGBT news website *Gay Star News* reported: 'The UK government may have failed to ban poppers despite being determined to do so and thinking they have succeeded - because of their own scientific advisors.

'The Home Office asked its own internal UK's Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs (ACMD) to investigate poppers further after the ban provoked controversy.

'Those advisors have today issued an unequivocal statement saying that they do not consider poppers - alkyl nitrites - to be psychoactive.

'Because of this, it does not believe poppers need exemption status with regard to the UK's Psychoactive Substances Act.

'The new law, which doesn't even come into effect until 6 April, bans anything 'psychoactive' unless it is 'exempted', like alcohol and caffeine. Poppers were considered to be psychoactive, so were swept up in the law, but now the scientists have said they don't consider that to be true.

'Even if the government insists they are banned under the law, the legislation could now be challenged in court, with poppers supporters using the gov-

ernment's own advisors as expert witnesses against the law.

The government's top advisory body on drugs was responding to a request from MP Karen Bradley, Minister for Preventing Abuse, Exploitation and Crime, who is to oversee a review of poppers' inclusion in the Psychoactive Substances Act.'

Poppers are used by many gay men, as they have the effect of relaxing muscles, resulting in easier anal sex.

Parliament voted against granting poppers exemption status but ruled that their inclusion in the act was to be reviewed once the legislation comes into effect.



GET ALL THE LATEST LOCAL NEWS AS IT HAPPENS AT MIDLANDSZONE.CO.UK

Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/midlandszone and on Twitter at www.twitter.com/midlandszone

Headliner announced for L Fest 2016

Organisers of award-winning lesbian festival L Fest have announced the first headline act for the 2016 event.

Iconic lesbian music star Heather Peace has been confirmed to appear on Sunday 17 July, closing the music stage at the festival.

Heather released her debut album, *Fairytales*, in 2012 and follow-up offering *The Thin Line* in 2014. As well as headlining at L Fest, she's releasing a new EP, *Come Home*.

A European and a full band UK tour are also planned for 2016.

Heather is well known for her work as a television actress, having starred in series including *London's Burning*, *Ultimate Force*, *Lip Service* and *Prey*. She left her leading role in BBC One drama *Waterloo Road* in 2014 to fully commit to her music career.

Over the last three years, Heather has performed four sell-out UK tours with her full band, as well as four sell-out solo acoustic tours. She's headlined London Pride, performed with her idol, Alison Moyet, and played shows with KT Tunstall, Rebecca Ferguson, Deacon Blue and Brian May. Internationally, she's twice sold out tours across Australia, as well as headlining the world-famous Sydney Mardi Gras Fair Day.



Cindy Edwards, founder of L Fest, commented: "We were delighted to secure Heather for 2016. She's a name that keeps coming up in our feedback surveys, so we're very excited to get her on board this year. Heather is the start of our roll-out campaign for artists this year. We have many more big announcements to come over the next few months, and 2016 ticket sales are already proving that this is going to be an exciting year."

L Fest takes place at Uttoxeter Racecourse, Staffordshire, from Friday 15 July until Monday 18 July. Tickets are available from www.lfest.co.uk.

Coventry Pride 2016 receives funding from City Council



Coventry Pride, the registered charity organising this June's Coventry LGBT+ Pride Festival, has secured a grant for the event from Coventry City Council.

Paul Desson-Baxter, Chair of the Charity, said: "This is great news. With the support of the City Council, this event will build on the success of Pride 2015, which over 6,000 people attended."

The next public meeting for Pride will be on 12 April at Council House, Coventry (7pm).

For more details, visit www.coventrypride.org.uk

Marc Almond announced in Pride line-up for Brum gay venue



Iconic Soft Cell frontman Marc Almond will perform at award-winning gay venue Eden Bar over Birmingham Pride weekend.

Almond is best known for hits such as *Tainted Love*, *Say Hello*, *Wave Goodbye*, *Torch* and *What!*.

Eden will also host Pride-

weekend performances by Liberty X singer Kevin Simm and X Factor stars Sam Bailey, Seann Miley Moore and Andrea Faustini.

Birmingham Pride takes place on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May, with free entry being offered to Eden Bar all weekend long.

UKIP West Midlands representatives back equality and same-sex marriage

UKIP representatives in the West Midlands region declared unanimous support for a motion promoting equality at their recent Annual General Meeting in Walsall.

The motion, proposed by Dudley & Halesowen delegate Shaun Keasey, calls upon the region to "assert the principles of a libertarian party by supporting the right of the individual not to be discriminated against, regardless of race, age, disability, gender or re-assigned gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy or religion."

The motion further requests that the region "support the right of the individual to enter into the union of marriage or civil partnership, whether between a man and a woman or same-sex couple."

Shaun, who's gay himself, was pleased but not surprised at the unanimous support: "Since joining UKIP, I've been treated with nothing but equality and respect. Unfortunately it's the silly comments made by a tiny minority that attract the headlines, not the hard work and dedication of the thousands of UKIP

members."

West Midlands UKIP MEP Bill Etheridge is delighted with the result: "This motion, and the fact that it was backed unanimously, should blast away any misconceptions about UKIP. I have always stated that I am proud to be in a diverse party that stands up for Britain's population."

"There is no place for intolerance in society, and I congratulate UKIP West Midlands for its lead and vision."

Incoming UKIP West Midlands Region Chair, Andrew Garcarz, said: "We recently held our first regional conference, with a diverse array of speakers, including LGBT* In UKIP and an Imam from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association. All were welcomed, all were heard and all received warm applause and support."

"This motion will now be adopted into the UKIP West Midlands constitution, and it calls upon the National Executive Committee of UKIP to support, follow and ratify the same across the whole country."

New Trans* Sexual Health & Wellbeing Clinic coming to Birmingham



Birmingham LGBT, in partnership with Umbrella, now provide sexual health services for LGBT communities and MSM in Birmingham and Solihull.

A sexual health team is now in place, based at Birmingham's LGBT Centre, who are developing and expanding a range of sexual health and wellbeing services.

One of the next services to be introduced is a sexual health and wellbeing clinic specifically for Trans* people.

Alexus Savage - Trans Sexual Health Outreach Worker - will be working closely with NHS clinicians and other wellbeing service providers to develop the new Trans*

Sexual Health Clinic, and is currently consulting with Trans people for their views and input into developing the new service.

Alexus says: "We're very excited about this. It's a long time coming and we can't wait to have the needs of the trans community addressed with a new trans clinic."

Birmingham LGBT is really keen to get the views of trans people through their survey.

"Quality and appropriate services for Trans people are few and far between," says Alexis, "and their needs are often overlooked or just not considered. We're aiming to provide a culturally competent, supportive, safe, confidential space in which Trans people can be provided with the appropriate sexual health and wellbeing services they deserve."

LGBT Leadership In The Workplace event to be held in Birmingham

An new LGBT Leadership In The Workplace event will this month provide an insight into some of the barriers facing LGBT employees - and also some of the benefits of investing in them.

The event will outline and publicly launch Birmingham LGBT's unique programme, the LGBT Leadership Academy.

The event will include contributions from the following speakers:

Steven Skakel, Trustee of the Barrow Cadbury Foundation.

Jules Bellingham, Board Member of Birmingham LGBT and independent

Leadership Training Consultant.

Karen Egan, Institute of Leadership and Management.

Matt Daniels, LGBT Leadership Academy Consultant.

The event, hosted by The Penthouse in Birmingham on Wednesday 13 April, will start at 3pm and formally finish at 5pm.

An opportunity for questions and networking will then be provided between 5pm and 6pm.

If you would like further information about the event or programme, contact Matt Daniels on 07966 418 713 or via midanconsult@gmail.com.



GAYLIFESSOTP



☆ **18 - 30's Group** ☆
Every Monday : 7pm - 9.30pm
@ Piccadilly Project

Lack of funding could close LGBT Network Wolverhampton

The Executive Board of Wolverhampton's LGBT Network have had to make the necessary decision to drastically reduce LGBT Centre opening hours due to a lack of funding.

Currently, services are available between 8am and 6pm on weekdays and from 10am until 4pm on Saturdays. New opening hours from Friday 1 April will be reduced to 12noon until 4pm, Tuesday to Friday. There will be a limited number of appointments outside of these times. For the time being, the LGBT groups provided by the Network will continue to run as usual.

LGBT Network began developing services in the middle of June 2011, with a three-year funding grant from Wolverhampton City Council of £40,000 per year. This funding was to cover a full-time worker's salary and all operating costs.

Services developed at a rapid rate, with the centre being open six days a week and offering counselling, buddying, mentoring, employment support, practical support, information and advocacy, a Victims of Hate Crime & Domestic Abuse service, mental health peer support groups, confidence-building groups and free space to over 20 local LGBT social groups.

The Network also successfully runs Wolves Pride, with funding for this sourced separately from Centre costs.

Martha Bishop, the Network's CEO, said: "We're really proud of all we've achieved over the last five years, and have been striving towards financial self-sustainability. The whole of our centre overheads and costs, including my salary, are just £52,000 per year. We already currently earn £18,000 from our various income streams and it's



growing all the time. We also apply for various funding bids for various projects, which often contributes to covering our core costs. This is the first time there is nothing due in from grants."

Pat McArdle, Network Chair, said: "While we recognise the change of government thinking in funding civil society and the resulting closures within the voluntary sector, it's imperative that Wolverhampton LGBT Network survives. The vital work that the volunteers and Martha undertake makes such a difference to the LGBT community and the wider community of the Black Country. Such incredible work has been done by the Network to achieve sustainability. This must be allowed to continue, as we're so close to overcoming the significant challenge of replacing 100% of our income."

Further information available:
www.leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk

Free, private and confidential sexual health checks to gay & bisexual men, and men who have sex with men (MSM).



Celts Narborough Road Sauna Clinic:

Day: Tuesdays

Time: 3pm - 6pm

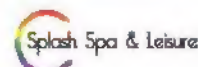
Place: 38 Narborough Road, Leicester, LE3 0BO

City Celts Sauna Clinic:

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 3pm - 5pm

Place: 33 New Bond Street, Leicester, LE1 4RQ



Day: Thursdays

Time: 3pm - 6pm

Place: 61 Bedford Street, Leicester, LE1 3JR



You can also check out Trade Sexual Health:

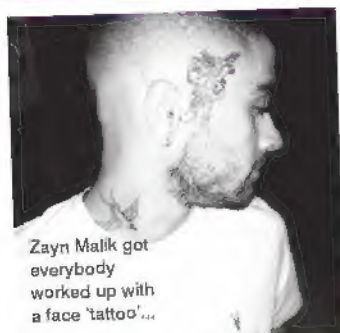
www.tradesexualhealth.com

THE VIRAL ROUND UP

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN LOOKING AT ONLINE...

CELEB SNAPS!

OUR FAVOURITE PICTURES FROM INSTAGRAM...



We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often, we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!

See this amazing **STOP MOTION DRAG** transformation by Mexican drag queen...



Here at Midlands Zone, we're big fans of drag. Whether it's home-grown talent here in the Midlands - such as Marty, Charlotte the Harlotte, Twigg or the Housewives of Birmingham - or from across the pond in America with the stars of RuPaul's Drag Race. So we loved it when we stumbled across this video of Mexican guy Pablo creatively showcasing his transformation from himself to his drag persona, Pam Sashaa. Not only is Pam Sashaa's makeup creative, but the use of stop motion in the video is just as impressive - we love it! You can watch it for yourself by heading here: youtu.be/xjn1vd_mnWI

Watch as this dude's **COMING OUT PRANK** goes really wrong with his girlfriend...

Mystic from YouTube prank channel's MysticGotJokes got a taste of his own medicine when one of his latest pranks totally backfired! The prankster, who has over two million subscribers, sat his girlfriend down to reveal that he was gay after falling for a guy he'd met at the gym. But when his girlfriend said that "it all makes sense", Mystic couldn't believe it - with hilarious results! Watch the prank here: youtu.be/g6KTZwaMnNM



BIRMINGHAM

pride



SAT 28 & SUN 29 MAY
Birmingham Gay Village

2016 THEME:
A GENERATION
OF PRIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST 2 DAY LGBT FESTIVAL

THE LINE-UP SO FAR INCLUDES:

ERASURE'S ANDY BELL | KATY B
LISA STANSFIELD | FLEUR EAST | MNEK
DJ FRESH | 99 SOULS | RITON | KAREN HARDING
ANNE-MARIE | VENGABOYS | LUCY SPRAGGAN
MASON NOISE | BOOTY LUV | JAGUAR SKILLS
AMANDA WILSON | MELISSA TOTTEN | DE EXPERIENCE

PLUS MANY MORE ARTISTS STILL TO BE ANNOUNCED!

PLUS OVER 100 ACTS & DJS THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND

CARNIVAL PARADE | MAIN STAGE | DANCE ARENA | CABARET MARQUEE | FUNFAIR | STREET PARTY

TICKETS & INFO AT www.birminghampride.com



Anna Lies

Member of The Housewives of Birmingham
The Nightingale, Birmingham

Born: Cambridge

Star sign: Taurus

Age: 21

About Anna

Where did you grow up?

A small town outside Cambridge, in a small village with no more than a few hundred people. I would spend hours in my box of a bedroom, clipping in fake hair and applying layers of lipstick.

Single or attached?

Single. Too busy in drag or painting faces for anyone to see who's underneath the paint.

What makes you happy?

Art, music and friends. I surround myself with the most strange substances, but it keeps me sane.

What makes you sad?

Distance.

What makes you angry?

Rude, small-minded and manipulative people. Please don't test me!

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

From my younger years, the consumption of food. I wish I could've told myself that I'd regret every bag of crisps and every glass of full-fat fizz! Slowly working on my body to be fit and happy.

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

I'm sure I do a lot of embarrassing things on my nights out in drag, but I don't get embarrassed - I just laugh at myself.

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

Always have! That's if someone can cope with me for that long.

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

I think I knew I was different aged around 12 or 13, but didn't fully understand for a while.

When did you come out?

I don't think I ever did. I was lucky to have a family who just accepted what I wanted in life. I adore them for that, even if I don't show it.

What was school like for you as a gay teenager?

Fat. Gay. Different. It was hard, but I made a joke of most things. I'd laugh with them, even if they were laughing at me.

Who was the first person you told you were gay, and what was their reaction?

I don't feel like I was ever questioned that much on my sexuality. It was more my gender that people would question. People wanted to know what I had between my legs, not where I put it.

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

Be yourself. No matter how different you feel you may be, just make yourself happy and you'll meet people who understand.

Have you ever had any experiences with the opposite sex?

Love notes, kissees, smoking cigarettes and cute nights with Boo Sutcliffe and Bethany Nicoles is all I will say!

Your Career

How did the Housewives of Birmingham come about?

Four arty creatures hiding in the lowlight areas of the scene! We all pulled through in many ways, but it was Dantony, the dramatic duo (Dan & Antony), who work hard at the Nightingale club, who decided we needed something new on the scene. So they called us in, one by one, and we slowly evolved into Housewives Of Birmingham.

What is that you guys do?

The Housewives spend a lot of time with the people on our scene - we see everything first hand, hosting all angles, corners, bars and bins of the Nightingale club. We've been known to help out the lost children or simply dance the night away.

How do you feel you've changed the environment of the scene?

Four different backgrounds, styles and personalities coming together have created a more unique place, opening doors to people who wouldn't have imagined finding themselves dancing with a 7ft 'drag queen in green' at 3am!

What does it mean to you being part of the Housewives of Birmingham?

My sisters are my guided family, something maybe nobody else could help with. We support one another through tough times and enjoy the laughs as we apply layers of paint and powder. We're there for one another, whatever the time of day, and I thank them dearly.

Where do you see this going over the next few years?

The Housewives have already started to push the boat out. We've been booked for a fashion show and have many events lined up. My career is slowly on the rise due to my makeup and creativity. I've spent a few months travelling with my company and for drag, so the future is looking exciting.

Which are your favourite Housewives Of Birmingham looks?

Halloween 2015, World AIDS Day - we really pulled together to create a strong image and looked beautiful - and how can we forget New Year's Eve? To be honest, my sisters can pull some looks together with whatever we can find in the back room.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene?

My first night out was about a year and a half ago. I've met so many great people in my journeys in Birmingham.

What's been your fondest memory of the gay scene?

Meeting people who've become a huge part of my life. Naming would be hard, but they know who they are and how much they mean to me. I love them all.

Who's your favourite cabaret act on the gay scene?

I hardly get out from my day work and nightlife to see the wonderful cabaret acts of Birmingham, but Twiggy, Miss Penny, Marty and Baga Chipz.

Who's your favourite person on the gay scene?

I simply couldn't pick one person, as they're all fabulous - the bar staff family, security, management, housekeeping. One unique person is Gaz Barton, who I met one evening on the scene last year. I didn't realise how much he would change my life.

What do you most enjoy about the gay scene?

Being able to be as creative and wild as can be. Many nights will you find Anna and Lacey on the

floor, having fake sex in green s edge! Partying until the end is always a winner

How would you change the gay scene?

Let the creative minds flow no hiding in the back, be you, have fun and be safe

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

My home club of The Night ngale Whether n drag or not, I can have such a augh

What do you do to relax?

My sofa, a ong with the six fluffy blankets. I ove having my friends over, making food and having a augh

What do you enjoy on telly?

I rarely have time to watch TV I ove First Dates If not, I'll be watching Nigera Lawson

What was the last album or track you bought?

Grimes Art Angels

Which one website do you spend the most time on?

www.onlydudes.co.uk and my website, www.anna.es.co.uk

Which type of holiday do you prefer?

I've never been on holiday abroad but will be visiting Japan later this year

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Julia Roberts Her smile klls me!

What's your favourite book?

Michelle Visage's The Diva Rules

Half empty or half full?

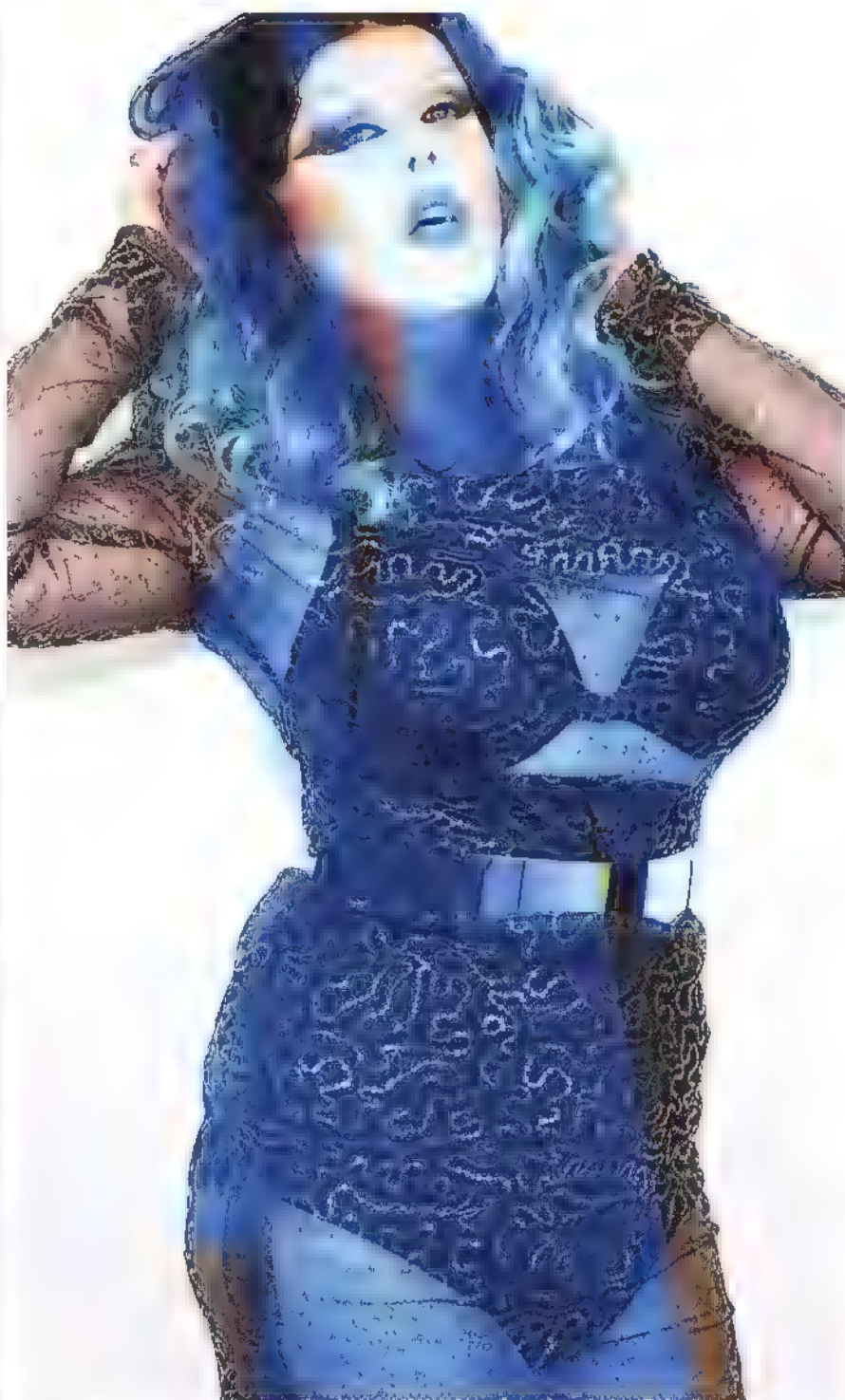
Half empty. It must be time to re-fuel

What's your favourite food?

Thai, but I love cooking and will try anything

And how about your favourite drink?

Something with at least a double



vodka. Please bear that in mind when I'm lingering around the bar!

Madonna or Lady Gaga?

Inspiration at both ends. But

when Lady Gaga screams, I get goosebumps

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

Leigh Bowery I'd not just want a selfie. I'd want to experience the nightlife

BIRMINGHAM PRIDE

#Pride20: Celebrating a 'Generation of Pride'



SAT 28 & SUN 29 MAY - SPRING BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND

After last year's massively successful Birmingham Pride, the city is now gearing up for the 2016 event, which takes place over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend of Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May.

Taking the theme A Generation Of Pride, the festival will be celebrating the pivotal, hard-fought achievements of the LGBT community over the last 20 years. These milestones include an equal age of consent, civil partnerships, the right to serve in the military, the right for trans

people to legally change their gender, marriage for lesbian, gay and bisexual couples, and equal adoption rights for same-sex couples. The UK also enjoys the highest LGBT representation of any parliament in the world.

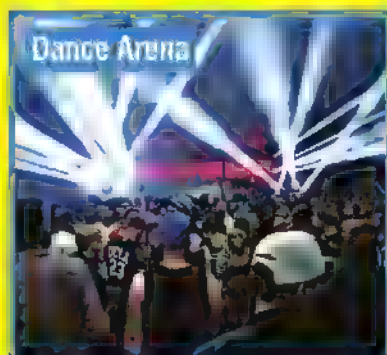
The weekend-long festival kicks off with a Carnival Parade, starting in Victoria Square at 12pm on Saturday the 28th.

As usual there'll be plenty to see and do at Birmingham Pride across the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, with over 100 acts and DJs appearing across the Main Stage, Dance Arena, Cabaret Marquee and Women's Arena.



www.birminghampride.com

FEATURING



PRIDE'S BIGGEST EVER LINE-UP

Plus more acts still to be announced.



Erasure's
Andy Bell



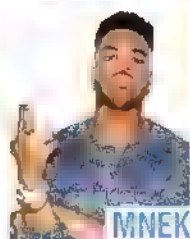
Katy B



Lisa Stansfield



Liberty X



MNEK



DJ Fresh



Fleur East



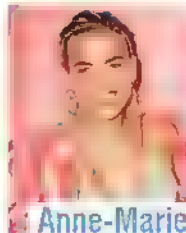
99 Souls



Riton



Karen Harding



Anne-Marie



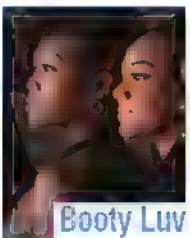
Vengaboys



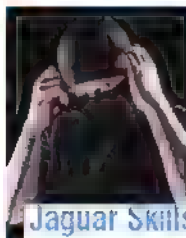
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Mason Noise



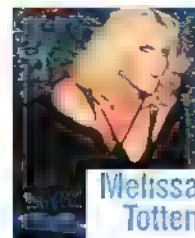
Booty Luv



Jaguar Skills



Amanda
Wilson



Melissa
Totten



Cabaret Marquee



Women's Arena



Funfair

ZONE Readers' Awards 2016

With a record-breaking number of votes cast - all of which were counted and independently verified - we can now reveal the results of the Midlands Zone Readers' Awards 2016.

This year, all the Awards were exclusively revealed on our Facebook and Twitter social media channels - with a reach of over 400k! Over the next few pages you can check out the winners, each pictured

with their award, as well as the breakdown of the voting in each category. Congratulations to all the FINALISTS and winners - and a big thank you to you for voting!

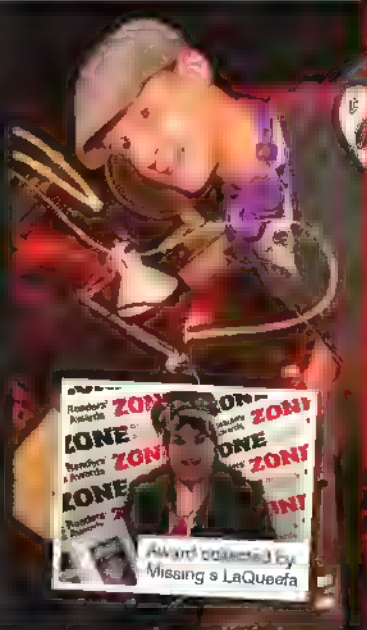
Special Recognition Award

AWARDED TO:

MYKEE MACKENZIE

Following the shock news of his death back in July 2015, the Special Recognition Award has posthumously been given to Mykee, to recognise his work for and dedication to Birmingham's gay scene over the years.

From being a much-loved DJ at gay venues such as Missing, The Village Inn and The Fox, to excelling at graphic design for the likes of Birmingham Pride and London Pride, Mykee's work will never be forgotten.



Outstanding LGBT Contribution Award

AWARDED TO:

MARTY SMITH

Marty has been a popular figure on Birmingham's gay scene for more than a decade, entertaining crowds as a performer and host at venues across the gay village. She is a dedicated and large amount of her time to Birmingham Pride, particularly using her creative skills on the Carnival Parade floats and more.



DAVID NASH

David's career in Birmingham's gay village started off at iconic gay venue Tin Tins. He then moved on to Partners, Missing and the Village Inn, also working for Studio One. David has also been a strong force behind the organisation of Birmingham Pride in recent years, selflessly dedicating hours of his time to help make it the success it is today.



And YOUR winners are...

Best Midlands Pride Event



WINNER

■ **Birmingham Pride** 61%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ Leicester Pride	21%
■ Nottinghamshire Pride	9%
■ Stoke Pride	6%
■ Walsall Pride	3%

Best Midlands LGBT Event



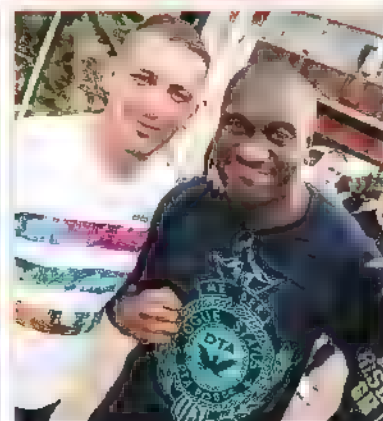
WINNER

■ **L Fest** 29%

Other Top 5 Nominees:

■ SHOUT Festival	24%
■ Rainbow Film Festival	22%
■ Family Pride	20%
■ Picnic in the Park	5%

Best Midlands One-Nighter



WINNER

■ **So It Goes @ The Nightingale** 27%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ XXL @ The Core	25%
■ Midsbears @ Eden	20%
■ Block Party @ Gorgeous	19%
■ Tin Tins @ Club Chic	9%

Best Sauna/Health Club



WINNER

■ **The Greenhouse - Darlaston** 34%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **CS2 - Nottingham** 32%
 ■ **Spartan - Birmingham** 13%
 ■ **Unit 2 - Birmingham** 12%
 ■ **Splash - Leicester** 9%

Best Venue for Men



WINNER

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 41%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Fountain - Birmingham** 25%
 ■ **Boltz - Birmingham** 21%
 ■ **Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent** 8%
 ■ **The Lion - Walsall** 5%

Best Venue for Women



WINNER

■ **The Fox - Birmingham** 32%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 28%
 ■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 26%
 ■ **Sidewalk - Birmingham** 8%
 ■ **The White Hart - Wolverhampton** 6%

Best Café Bar/Restaurant



WINNER

■ **The Loft Lounge - Birmingham** 44%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Sidewalk - Birmingham** 32%
 ■ **Bossa - Leicester** 9%
 ■ **Bond Street Tavern - W'hampton** 8%
 ■ **The Red Lion - Walsall** 7%

Best Community Venue



WINNER

■ **Equator - Birmingham** 28%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 27%
 ■ **The Wellington - Birmingham** 26%
 ■ **The Fox - Birmingham** 14%
 ■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 5%

Best Venue Security Person



WINNER

■ **Jermaine Holder - Eden** 26%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Dom Dawes - The Nightingale** 25%
 ■ **Rach Selvey - The Lion** 22%
 ■ **Shiv Brijmohun - Missing** 20%

Best Security Team



WINNER

■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 27%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 25%
 ■ **Missing - Birmingham** 23%
 ■ **Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent** 18%
 ■ **The Village Inn - Birmingham** 7%

Best Front of House Person



WINNER

■ **Garry Prentice - Eden** 43%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Dean Taylor - Missing** 27%
 ■ **Hilli Rishworth - The Fox** 25%
 ■ **Lewis Brown - Dover Castle** 3%
 ■ **Laszlo Hollo - Eden** 2%

Best Front of House Team



WINNER

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 47%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 21%
 ■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 13%
 ■ **The Village Inn - Birmingham** 11%
 ■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 8%

Best Outdoor Area



WINNER

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 24%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

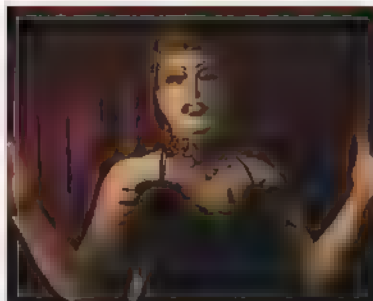
■ **Eden - Birmingham** 22%

■ **The Loft Lounge - Birmingham** 21%

■ **Gossip - Stoke-on-Trent** 19%

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 14%

Best New/Refurbished Venue



WINNER

■ **Glamorous - Birmingham** 33%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

■ **Gorgeous - Wolverhampton** 32%

■ **Clonezone Fetish Floor - B'ham** 21%

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 8%

■ **Moments Café - Birmingham** 6%

Best Live Entertainment Venue



WINNER

■ **The Village Inn - Birmingham** 33%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

■ **Eden - Birmingham** 31%

■ **The Nightingale - Birmingham** 30%

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 4%

■ **The White Hart - Wolverhampton** 2%

Best Midlands Gay Bar (outside Birmingham)



WINNER

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 28%

Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The White Hart - Wolverhampton** 24%

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 19%

■ **Rainbow & Dove - Leicester** 15%

■ **Pink - Stoke-On-Trent** 14%

Best Birmingham Gay Bar



WINNER

■ **Eden** 32%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

■ **The Village Inn** 31%

■ **Missing** 17%

■ **The Loft Lounge** 14%

■ **Sidewalk** 6%

Best Midlands Gay Club (outside Birmingham)



WINNER

■ **Gorgeous - Wolverhampton** 28%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

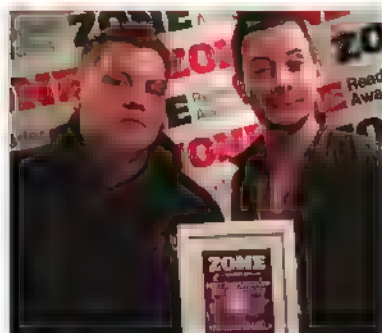
■ **Helsinki - Leicester** 24%

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 22%

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 19%

■ **Rainbows - Coventry** 7%

Best Birmingham Gay Club



WINNER

■ **The Nightingale** 81%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

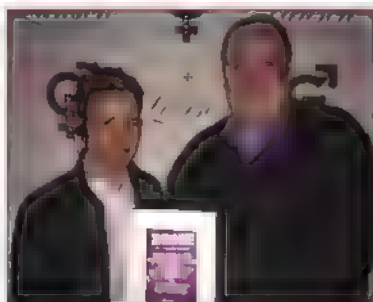
■ **The Core** 9%

■ **Club Chic** 7%

■ **The Village Underground** 2%

■ **Boltz** 1%

Best Midlands Overall Venue (outside Birmingham)



WINNER

■ **Gorgeous - Wolverhampton** 33%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

■ **The Lion - Walsall** 23%

■ **Gossip - Stoke-On-Trent** 22%

■ **Dover Castle - Leicester** 17%

■ **Rainbows - Coventry** 5%

Best Birmingham Overall Gay Venue



WINNER

■ **Eden** 39%

Other Top 5 Nom nees

■ **The Nightingale** 31%

■ **The Village Inn** 15%

■ **The Loft Lounge** 11%

■ **Missing** 4%

Best Charity or Group of Achievement



WINNER

■ **Birmingham LGBT** 67%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **LGBT Network Wolverhampton** 12%
■ **AB Plus** 9%
■ **Terrence Higgins Trust** 8%
■ **Trade Sexual Health** 4%

Best LGBT Sport or Social Group



WINNER

■ **Birmingham Bulls RFC** 28%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **BGSO** 26%
■ **Acting Out** 18%
■ **Birmingham Blaze FC** 15%
■ **Leicester Wildcats** 13%

Best Retail/Online Store



WINNER

■ **Clonezone** 44%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **John Lewis** 19%
■ **Wolverhampton LGBT Charity Shop** 14%
■ **Selfridges** 13%
■ **Prowler.co.uk** 10%

Best Bar DJ

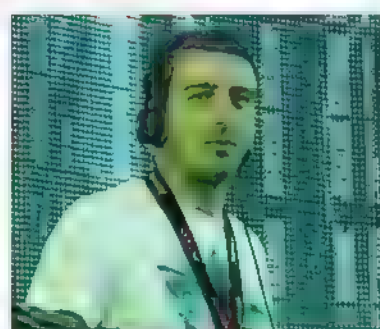


WINNER

■ **Dan Williams - Eden** 31%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Richard Moon - The Village Inn** 24%
■ **Deano Trickett - The Village Inn** 21%
■ **Mike Emery - Missing** 18%
■ **Rob Lambeth - Dover Castle** 6%

Best Club DJ

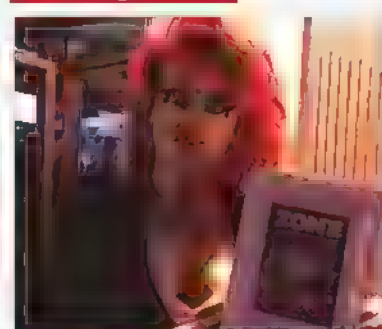


WINNER

■ **Michael Felton - The Nightingale** 25%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Corey Hadley - The Nightingale** 24%
■ **Destiny Dyson - Gossip** 22%
■ **Simon Baker - The Nightingale** 16%
■ **Rob Lambeth - Helsinki** 13%

Best Compere/Host



WINNER

■ **Charlotte the Harlotte** 25%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Marty Smith** 24%
■ **Miss Penny** 23%
■ **Twiggy** 21%
■ **Candy Fierce** 7%

Best Midlands Cabaret Act

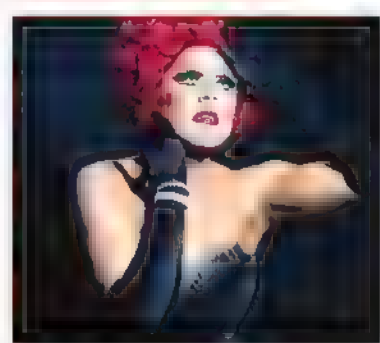


WINNER

■ **Miss Penny** 31%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Twiggy** 26%
■ **Tilly** 16%
■ **Glitter Lips** 15%
■ **Tiara Thunderpussy** 12%

Best National Cabaret Act



WINNER

■ **La Voix** 25%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **The Drag With No Name** 24%
■ **Sandra** 23%
■ **Charlie Hides** 16%
■ **Baga Chipz** 12%

Midlands Scene Personality



WINNER

■ **Lawrence Barton** 37%
Other Top 5 Nominees

■ **Garry Prentice** 24%
■ **Miss Penny** 19%
■ **Marty Smith** 18%
■ **Andy King** 2%

Fostering: The best thing we've ever done!

Ever thought about fostering a child? If so, you probably thought 'Yes, but...' and then the objections kicked in: 'We're gay', 'I'm single', 'perhaps, if we were married?'

But for LGBT people thinking about fostering, these barriers – like a lot of the other barriers – just aren't there anymore.

Who can foster a child and how fostering fits in with your daily life has undergone huge changes as fostering services – like Sandwell – have moved towards a more progressive view of what it means to foster a child.

Once upon a time, people who wanted to become foster carers had to give up work and commit to fostering as a full-time job with no other options. We still have many fantastic full-time foster carers, but thankfully, modern fostering is much more flexible. Plenty of people combine their childcare and working responsibilities, either as part of a working couple or as a single person.

The truth is we need more foster carers, so being a modern fostering service, we want to work with people who have the time, space and commitment to offer a child a secure, nurturing environment in which to grow and be supported as they develop. Gender, orientation, being single or a couple are not at all a barrier.

That doesn't mean it's easy to become a foster carer – nor should it be. As a foster carer, you could be looking after a child who may well have had a tough start in life. Being a foster carer isn't an easy option. It's challenging, but when you get it right, the rewards are amazing.

.....

Take Jacqueline and Gaynor, for example. They've been fostering for Sandwell for six years and, to date, have looked after 28 children.

"We've always liked children, a ways had children around us, with family and friends. When we went on holiday with a friend and her little boy he was terrified of the swimming pool at the beginning of the week. By the end of the week the two of us had got him swimming and his mum said, 'You're really good with children, have you ever thought of fostering?' We said, 'They wouldn't accept us because we're gay' and she said, 'No I think that's completely changed now, you won't find that's an

ISSUE

"So we came home brooded on it a little and agreed to apply to Sandwell. The process took us 18 months, although we're told it can be a lot quicker now. Sandwell have been really proactive and supportive."

For both Jacqueline and Gaynor, it's clear that the motivation to foster is all about looking after children. "When we were of an age to consider having a child of our own, it was less accepted for two women to have a child. But fostering's brought so much to our lives. It's just been brilliant – the best thing we ever did. We just wish we'd done it sooner."

"We've got so much to give, but perhaps when we were younger, we didn't have so much experience and time. Now we're much more settled. We want to be in the house, in the garden, taking the kids to school."

"We knew that our relationship was strong and any negativity we'd encounter through fostering we'd be able to weather, because we've been through a lot together. But we haven't found it negative at all."

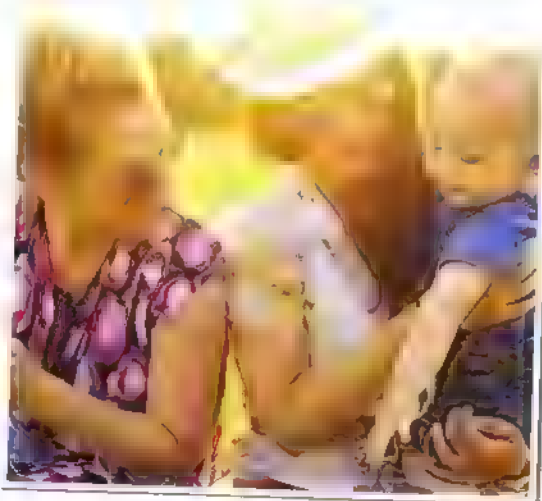
Jacqueline and Gaynor are very committed to being foster carers, so much so that both are now full-time carers after Gaynor decided to give up her previous career as a financial consultant. "I felt I was missing out on too much, so I had to put a stop to that!"

But you have to be sure. Gaynor kept on working for a year after becoming a carer. "It was a big thing for me, as I've always worked. It was scary to say, 'I'm going to quit my job' – very scary, but it's the best thing I've ever done."

"I get time to spend with the kids now – we all play the PlayStation and X-Box together!"

Which is very much Jacqueline and Gaynor's choice, but as Jacqueline says: "You don't have to be stuck at home with babies. When you're approved to foster you can say what aged children you want to care for, and a lot of that is to do with your lifestyle."

"We chose to focus on caring for children aged 0 to 10, but that's another thing



people don't realise about fostering – you can focus on an age group so you can say you would prefer teenagers if you don't have the support network to be at home all day and want to care for a child that can be more self-sufficient. It's up to you."

For Jacqueline and Gaynor, the motivation to foster is as strong now as it was on day one.

"It's just the progression of the children – to see them develop and grow from often not being in a good place when they arrive to being secure and properly fed – it can be such a dramatic change."

But what about when it's time for a child to move on?

"It's hard, but seeing them move on to the right place – to see them being adopted by loving families that are thrilled to be able to get them or go back to parents who've overcome issues, certainly helps. The way we cope is to move on – there's another child that needs us. That child's settled now, in a good place, so let's help another child."

Before we left, Jacqueline and Gaynor were asked what they would say to anyone reading this that might be thinking about fostering but are worried they might not qualify. "Apply, enquire, just find out. You might enquire and think 'It's not for me'. You might think that you won't be accepted, but you don't know. So just pick up the phone and say 'Look, I'm interested,' and take it from there. That's how it all started for us."

If you're thinking about fostering, call us and get the facts on 0800 358 0899.

Fostering:

I won't always
tidy my room

I won't always say
thank you

I won't always
behave

But I'll never
forget you.



Fostering with Sandwell - it's for good

call us to find out how you can make a difference

0800 358 0899

www.sandwell.gov.uk/fostering

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with sandwell



Sandwell Fostering



Sandwell
COUNCIL

WHAT'S IT LIKE LIVING WITH SAME-SEX PARENTS?

We ask the children of
same-sex parents for their
side of the story...

With the huge increase in same-sex couples starting a family of their own, whether through adoption, fostering, surrogacy or previous relationships, have you ever wondered what it's like for a child to grow up with two mums or two dads?

Here, we talk to a number of children of varying ages about their experiences.

First up, we speak to **Kian (17)** and **Shannon (19)** Taylor-Jackson - son and daughter of **Tracie** and **Sarah** Taylor-Jackson.

Are there any advantages to having same-sex parents?

Kian: I don't see that there are any advantages. All I see it as is a working functional family like any other.

Shannon: I find the fact that I have two mums gives me more of a female understanding.

How about the disadvantages?

Kian: The only real disadvantage is that I have to constantly correct people, as they assume I have a father.

Shannon: I find that I'm always stuck in the cycle of being told to "Go and ask your mum"! Seriously, though, there's obviously discrimination due to me having same-sex parents.

Have you ever faced discrimination?

Shannon: I'd been bullied all the way through high school simply because my parents are lesbians. I have been both physically and mentally hurt due to this.

Kian: Whilst I was in primary school, I was

bullied very badly, enough to hospitalise me. Whilst it was never apparent why I was being targeted, the boys always made derogatory comments about my parents whilst bullying me.

When did you realise your family was different from your friends' families?

Shannon: My biological mum met my other mum when I was nine years old, but she's always been out as gay, so I've grown up with her having relationships. I guess I was about seven years old when I realised.

Have you noticed a shift in attitude from your peers as you've grown up?

Kian: Yes, as I've gotten older they've become more open and accepting for sure.

Shannon: In my experience, as my peers at school got older the bullying became worse. Maybe that's a lack of correct teaching in schools leading to ignorant teenagers.

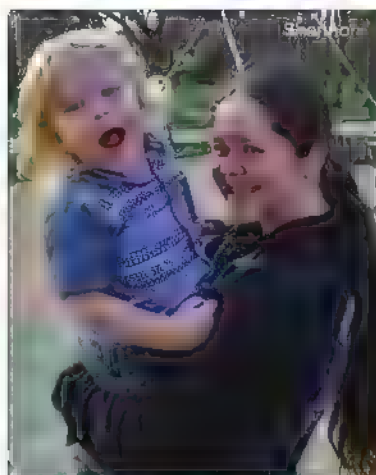
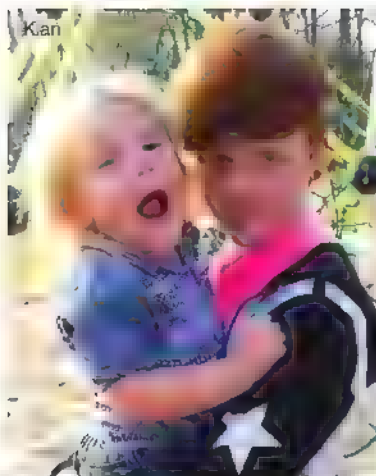
When growing up, did people think you were gay because your parents are?

Shannon: I was called a 'Dirty Lezza' all the time whilst at high school. Other kids even tried to set me on fire whilst at school in an attempt not to 'catch' it.

Do you think your upbringing may have suffered without a father figure?

Kian: I don't think my life has suffered from not having a father figure, as I don't think the gender of your parents matters. It's how much your parents care and love you and this isn't determined by gender.

"Other kids even tried to set me on fire whilst at school in an attempt not to 'catch' it."



Were you confused at any point about your family?

Shannon: No, never. My family is my family and we get together really well

Klan: I've never been confused about the makeup of my family. I was always brought up with my parents being honest with me about every situation.

What do you call your parents?

Shannon: Mumma and Mummy

Klan: Mum and Mummy

Have you ever questioned your own sexuality as a result?

Klan: My sexuality hasn't been influenced by the fact that I have same-sex parents, and I've never been confused about it. I'm comfortable with who I am. However, I was made more aware and open and know that my parents would accept me regardless of my sexuality.

Shannon: I never questioned my sexuality either. I'm heterosexual and comfortable with who I am.

If you were in your parents' position, would you do anything different?

Shannon: Obviously my birth mum had me before our family was created. However, I have a three-year-old brother who was born after my parents got married. I wouldn't do anything differently, as they've parented us to the best of their ability and they are excellent role models.

Klan: I wouldn't do anything differently either if I were my parents. They do a really good job of raising me and my siblings.

What advice would you give to children of same-sex parents who may be struggling with their situation?

Klan: I would say, don't pay attention to bullies or those who don't understand your situation, as they are narrow-minded individuals who're too ignorant to see that your family is just as 'normal' as theirs. If you encounter bullies, remember that your family is better than theirs because your parents will have explained about the world. Don't be afraid to stand up for yourself and defend what you know is correct.

Shannon: If they are experiencing discrimination, then as hard as it is, hold your head high and ignore them because you and your family have lots of worth in life, and as you get older, people will get more understanding. Talk about your feelings and what's going on in your life. Tell your parents because they will understand. That's what they are there for.

.....

Next, we speak to Connor (15), Reece (22), Richie (25) and Bob (28) Monkman and Sam Saxon (18) - all sons of Shaz and Lisa Garmston.

Are there any advantages to having same-sex parents?

Connor: Yes, learning how to respect women and, of course, learning how to pull them!

Reece: There are plenty of advantages. The respect I have towards other people I've gained from having same-sex parents. Two mothers are better than one!

Richie: Yeah, there's more food and teaches me respect for women!

Bob: No, what's the difference? As long as they have two (or even one) caring parent who do their best for you, their gender or sexuality is irrelevant.

Sam: It's generally the same as having opposite-sex parents. It's not different just because they're gay; they both love each other and love and look after us - and that's what a parent is supposed to do.

How about the disadvantages?

Reece: Disadvantages depend on your view. I don't see any disadvantages whereas many people have said stuff about it. I'm more in touch with my feminine side but that isn't a disadvantage to me.

Richie: There's twice as much PMT in the house!

Bob: It's the same as I mentioned before - what's the difference?

Have you ever experienced any discrimination because you've got same-sex parents?

Connor: Yes, but I didn't care. If it was people my age, I'd just tell them what was what.

Reece: Loads of discrimination comes my way. But ignorant people always have something to say. My mothers raised me not to take notice - and I don't.

Richie: No, I was accepted for having same-sex parents more than I expected.

Bob: I'm not one to tell people about my personal life regardless of what it is. As a 6ft 5in, long-haired 'grebo', discrimination was something I learned to ignore a long time ago, regardless of source or intent.

Sam: I faced some discrimination, yes, but I didn't really care. When I was younger it bothered me, as I didn't understand, but now I laugh, as my parents are great and I'm proud of them.

When did you realise your family was different from your friends' families?

Connor: They'd always explained the situation but I didn't care.

Reece: I've never really noticed. Family is where your parents are, and since I was six, my mothers have been my family. I've grown up with this and I know no different.

Richie: When my mom had a girlfriend!

Bob: I don't consider my family to be different. The main difference I had from my friends was that I had two parents, something most of my friends weren't fortunate enough to have.

Sam: I knew my family was different from my friends' families since I was young but they didn't mind and neither did I.

Have you noticed a shift in attitude from your peers as you've grown up?

Reece: I don't socialise with or find myself near homophobics or racists. The minute someone disrespects 'gays', I tell them how it is and move on.

Bob: No, I have a great set of friends. We've all dealt with different prejudices, so we don't care about how others choose to live their lives.

Sam: People have shown more respect to

wards gay people as I've got older, and some people did change their attitude. As I got to college, no-one really cared that my mom was gay.

When growing up, did people think you were gay because your parents are?

Connor: I've heard that a few times. Yes. But I either ignored them or set them straight.

Reece: I get asked that all the time. Having same-sex parents doesn't make me gay, just fabulous!

Richie: No, occasional jokes but nothing serious.

Sam: Not that I know of!

Do you think your upbringing may have suffered without a father figure?

Connor: I have a father figure - it was my grandad or Lisa (just with a vagina).

Reece: Without my mothers I wouldn't be the man I am today, so yes. My father not so much, but my grandfather was my father figure.

Richie: No, my mothers are my role models.

Bob: I've had both. You don't need a mom and a dad to have positive male or female role models.

Sam: No, my upbringing hasn't suffered at all, and I've always had father and mother figures in my life. My mom's very good friends with my dad and it's always been that way, but even then all three of them have been figures to me.

Were you confused at any point about your family?

Connor: No, they explained everything from the beginning.

Reece: As a child I might have questioned it, but it's all I've known, so I don't think so.

Bob: No. I just wanted my mom to be happy. She wasn't with my dad so I told her to move on.

Sam: No, it's all I've ever known. I was two when my moms got together and I've never been confused about it.

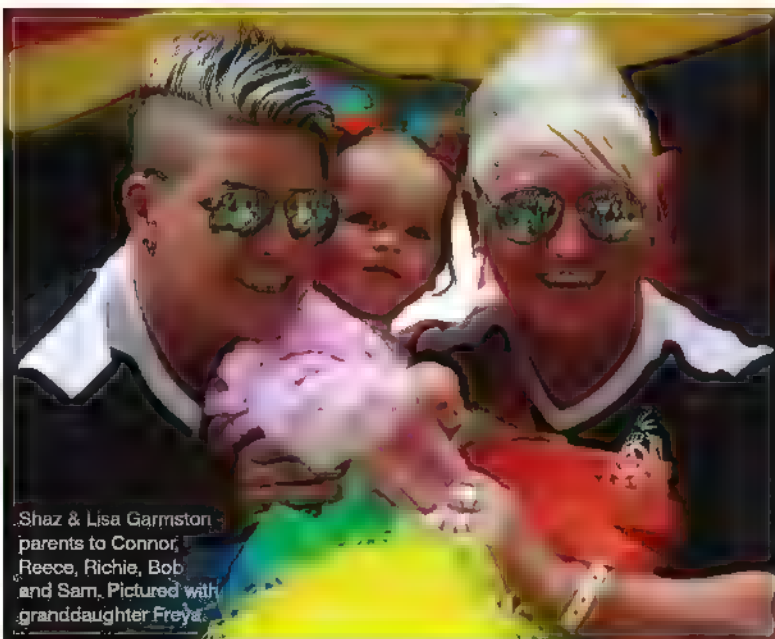
Have you and your family had any funny experiences due to you having same-sex parents?

Reece: There's been plenty. Every day brings new moments and memories.

Richie: We all perv on fit chicks in public!

Bob: My family is mental, regardless of my parents' sexuality. We have funny times sitting in an empty room.

Sam: Our house is always mental, we're always making jokes and messing about. Every day is a funny experience.



Shaz & Lisa Garrmston - parents to Connor, Reece, Richie, Bob and Sam. Pictured with granddaughter Freya.

Have you ever questioned your own sexuality as a result?

Connor: No, I haven't.

Reece: Not really. I have a very deep bromance with my best friend and people ask if we're together all the time.

Bob: I can't say I have. I've never really questioned my sexuality. I truly believe people love who they love. I love my girl friend, but if she was a man I don't think I'd feel differently. I wouldn't look at it in terms of sexuality, I'd look at it in terms of love.

Sam: No, if anything I am 100% happy with my sexuality, but if I did change my sexuality, I would be 100% supported.

If you were in your parents' position, would you do anything different?

Reece: Not at all. My mothers should gain awards for the way they've been. They're the biggest inspiration I know. If I become half the person they are, I'll live an amazing life (not that it's not already amazing).

Richie: No, definitely not. Love is love.

Bob: My moms are amazing! They always try their very best for me and my brothers. They always have and always will. I don't think they should ever change.

Sam: I don't think I would. They embrace who they are and we do too, I'm very proud of them.

What advice would you give to children of same-sex parents who may be struggling with their situation?

Connor: Just accept it because nine times out of ten, two moms or dads are better than one!

Reece: Don't listen or give in to people's ignorance. Your family is no different to anyone else's. Two people who take care of and live with you, that's family. Surround yourself with positivity. Love is love, and the sooner you accept that, the happier you'll be.

Richie: Forget people's discrimination and accept your situation the best you can.

Bob: Your parents are your parents. Who they choose to love is their choice, and you should respect that as long as they love you. If other people around you are making your life difficult, then leave them behind, true friends won't judge you for your parents' choices.

Other people will always look for a way to bring you down. Just remember that people who look for faults in others are only trying to hide the insecurities they have about themselves. You need to learn to ignore them and focus on being the best person you can be. Leave your mark and make sure it's one that improves the lives of others. Just keep smiling, you'll be fine as you get older. You'll learn to focus on the positive and leave the hate behind, as it only wastes your energy.

Sam: Embrace your parents - they love you, they make sure you're cared for and they will always stick by you, no matter what. So be proud, show them that you are, and love them. People can be small and narrow-minded, but they shouldn't get to you, as they are your parents and love you.

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MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE

For almost 30 years, Midland Fertility has helped lesbian couples and, more recently, gay couples to become families. More than 6,500 babies have been born since the clinic was established in 1987 - many of these following treatment with donor IUI and also IVF surrogacy.

Services For Gay Couples

Mid and Fertility offers gay couples the chance of fatherhood using an egg donor and a separate surrogate. Both partners are guided through the legal and medical aspects of surrogacy by specially trained clinical, laboratory and counselling staff. Surrogacy may require IVF or ICSI, and the use of donor eggs. The commissioning couple and the surrogate both receive extensive and separate consultations from different members of the clinical team to cover the medical, scientific, emotional and legal issues of surrogacy and the welfare interests of any current or future children.

When 'Paternal Instinct' Kicks In

After 24 years with his partner Andy and a very comfortable lifestyle, Gary slowly and very obviously was overcome with a case of paternal instinct.

"It wasn't a dream I'd always had," he explains, "possibly because when we were in our 20s and 30s, parenthood just didn't really happen for gay couples."

"Over the years, friends had asked if we would consider adopting, and while we thought it was a great thing to do, it wasn't for us. So we got on with being 'just' a couple."

"But a combination of being fortysomething and feeling a growing instinct to become a dad altered my perspective on what I really wanted in life - and luckily Andy wanted it too."

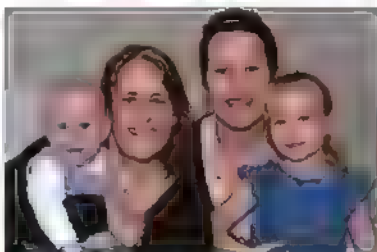
Once the commitment to transform from couple to family was made, Gary and Andy's path to parenthood was fairly rapid.

Gary (46) is a civilian with the police force and Andy (49) is a marketing manager in the motor industry. Life was good, but in 2013 the couple from Coventry went to Midland Fertility in Tamworth to find out about surrogacy. There they met Heidi Birch, the director of nursing services. Heidi continued to oversee their care throughout their treatment.

Midland Fertility offers host surrogacy,



Andy and Gary with their twins, Mamie and Dexter, egg donor Lucy, fertility nurse director Heidi Birch, and surrogate Sue.



Charlie and Cat with Harrison and Mya

where the eggs from a donor are fertilised with the sperm from the male couple and resulting embryos are transferred to a separate surrogate. This is considered preferable to 'straight surrogacy', where the surrogate conceives using her own eggs.

Through Surrogacy UK, they met Sue. And through Sue, Lucy, who wanted to become an egg donor, entered their lives. Introductions were made, and the four of them began an incredible journey that led to the birth of twins Mamie and Dexter in March 2014.

"At our first appointment, we knew that this was the right place for us to try and create a family," says Andy. "With the help of Sue and Lucy, Midland Fertility turned our dreams into reality."

"If we'd seen 500-plus egg donors and surrogates, we couldn't have found anybody better to help us have our family," says Gary. "Lucy and Sue will always be a huge part of our family life."

"Surrogacy can be emotionally and physically very complicated," says Heidi Birch. "But Gary and Andy's story shows that genetic fatherhood is possible with expert support and care - and in less than a couple of years too!"

Services For Lesbian Couples

Whether the required treatment is IUI or IVF - including shared motherhood or 'reciprocal IVF' - with sperm from a known donor or from a screened donor, Midland Fertility have sourced, the team can guide you every step of the way through your treatment plan - from initial tests to results, planning, course if required, and right up to the first pregnancy scan and beyond. They're with you all the way.

From Couple To Family

Having a family was something out of reach for Cat and Charlie Thompson until they met in 2006 - and subsequently married.

The decision to try for a family was a natural progression. They considered various methods of conceiving, including home insemination with donor sperm, but quickly discounted that as 'unsafe'.

Instead, the couple from Cannock were counselled through the process of intrauterine insemination by the team at Midland Fertility. Guidance also included the emotional and legal implications of using donor sperm.

"As with many same-sex couples," says Charlie, "there was a point in both our lives when our parents thought that becoming grandparents by us was never going to be an option. But telling them our plans to have fertility treatment gave them an excitement about new possibilities."

Cat and Charlie's daughter, Mya, was born in March 2012, followed by son Harrison in June 2015 - using the same donor.

"Mya means 'most wished for child' and she truly is," says Charlie. "And Harrison was truly a double blessing for us."

"When I first came out, my parents were really supportive, but dad was upset that he wouldn't see me get married and wouldn't get to be a granddad. Seven years later, he'd done both!"

"As we're married, both our names are on our children's birth certificates," says Cat, "making our family official!"

For more information, visit www.midlandfertility.com



Your
pride
and joy!

Make your dream of a family a reality

Midland Fertility, the Midlands' longest established independent fertility clinic, is dedicated to 'building futures, transforming lives' – including those of the hundreds of gay couples who we have helped to have children for more than 20 years. Located in a private building on the Tamworth retail park, it offers easy access, privacy and comfort. The new clinical suite and laboratories were designed to the highest specification and since they were commissioned in September 2014, many IVF success rates at Midland Fertility have constantly exceeded the national average by around 50+%.

Midland Fertility, Tamworth House, Ventura Park Road, Tamworth B78 3HL
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Fostering for Wolverhampton: An alternative option

Same-sex couples who are looking to expand their family to include children may have considered adoption or surrogacy - but one option which is often overlooked is fostering.

If you've ever wanted to find out more about what fostering involves, read on, as City of Wolverhampton Council's fostering service, Fostering For Wolverhampton, answers your questions...



What's the difference between adoption and fostering?

Adoption means taking a child into your home permanently and legally as part of your family. Fostering usually means offering a temporary home to children until they either return to the family home or move on to live with a relative, adopter or long-term foster carer. There are many similarities between adoption and long-term fostering. In both cases, you will look after a child as if they were your own son or daughter. The differences are mainly to do with the legal status of the child.

Why do children need fostering?

Children come into the care of the local authority for many reasons, but many are as a result of a lack of appropriate parenting or because the child has been mistreated and cannot stay in the family home until the situation changes. The one thing they all have in common is the need for a loving, safe and stable home. These children can be any age, from new-born up to 17, and often we need to find homes where we can place teenagers and brothers and sisters together.

Why do we need foster carers?

Foster carers provide local children in need with a loving, caring and nurturing environment, to give them the opportunity for a happy and successful life. We are very lucky to have many dedicated foster carers who combine a desire to help children with a commitment to providing the best possible care, but we have more youngsters who are looking for a short-term or permanent foster home. The Fostering For Wolverhampton team are keen to hear from individuals and couples who want to make a difference to a local child.

Why become a foster carer?

Fostering can truly be a life-changing experience, both for foster carers and the young people they care for. Our existing carers tell us that the rewards are easy to see - knowing you have helped a young person build a better life, by providing support at the time they need it most, gives you a real sense of achievement. City of Wolverhampton Council is responsible for looking after all children in need in the city, and we always place children with our own carers where possible, meaning

you will rarely have a time without a child in placement.

Who can be a foster carer?

We'd love to hear from anyone aged 21 and over who lives within a 20-mile radius of Wolverhampton, who has a spare room and love in their heart to help local children by fostering. Foster carers can be sole carers, married or in a relationship. If you are living together as a couple, you must have been living together for a minimum of one year. All enquiries will be considered, regardless of age, sex, race, disability, religion or sexual orientation. You don't have to have your own children or own your own home either. If you have any adopted children, they must have been with you for more than six months from the Adoption Order date.

What skills do you need to be a foster carer?

In our experience, the best foster carers are motivated by a genuine interest in caring for children and young people, but with a down-to-earth, common-sense way of dealing with the realities of life. Foster

carers are confident, patient and willing to work in partnership with others. You and your family will need to have a positive attitude to sharing your home with someone else. Being a foster carer means that, just like any other parent, you recognise the fact that it's always the children's needs that come first.

How long does it take to be approved?

There are a number of stages to the approval process, which will be undertaken by our team of qualified social workers. This will involve a number of meetings, assessments and background checks. Timescales vary for each application, but we aim to complete all assessments within six months. We will keep in regular contact with you throughout the whole process to update you on progress. This will be from a social worker within the Recruitment & Assessment Unit.

What support do foster carers receive?

City of Wolverhampton Council prides itself on offering a high level of support for all of our foster carers, to help them to deal with difficult situations. They are never on their own. In addition, all foster carers receive

support from our external provider, Foster Talk, who provide a 24 hour telephone helpline. New foster carers receive six months' buddy support from experienced foster carers who are there to befriended and guide them. Supervising social workers provide intensive support for the first six weeks of a placement and then every month thereafter. Carers also receive continuous training and can choose to take additional qualifications to help build their professional status.

How long will the child live with me?

Placements can be anything from a few days to a number of years. Every case will be different.

Will I get paid?

City of Wolverhampton Council uses a payment structure that recognises the skills, experience and expertise of foster carers to meet the needs of our looked after children. Regular payments are made based on the number and ages of the children you foster. You will receive extra payments for a child's birthday and annual festivals such as Christmas, as well as for other costs.

Why foster for City of Wolverhampton Council?

Fostering For Wolverhampton is a not-for-profit service responsible for all children coming into care in the city. We always place children with our own carers first, and only use independent agencies if we can't place children in-house. This means that our carers always have foster children in their care and rarely have empty places. Fostering For Wolverhampton means that you will always have a local child in your care, they will attend a local school and contact with siblings or relatives will take place locally. Unlike some agencies, we offer excellent on-going training and high levels of support, including six months of one-to-one buddying for new carers.

.....

If you have any further questions or would like to find out more, contact Fostering For Wolverhampton on 01902 551133 or visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/fostering.

Ben wants a brighter future

You can make a difference.
Foster a local child and transform their life.

We need people of all ages and backgrounds to become foster carers. If you have a **loving heart** and a **spare room** we give you full training and support and you could earn while you care.

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New volunteer LGBT Sexual Health Outreach will help with improving the sexual health and well being of the LGBT and MSM community in Birmingham and Solihull

Opportunities to gain valuable training and experience in sexual health promotion, outreach on the commercial scene and off scene environments

We would like to attract volunteers who care and have an interest in LGBT Sexual Health and Well being

We would also like to encourage applicants from Lesbian and Bi women to help lead the way in shaping the sexual health services provided for women

If you would like to know more about becoming a volunteer please get in touch with Andréa – Sexual Health Outreach Worker (Lesbian and Bi Women)

0121 643 0821 andreawillinger@blgbt.org

Family Pride is coming!

If you've got a family, you may like to get along to this summer's Family Pride. The event sees families with LGBT parents from across the UK come together for a full weekend of camping and activities in the beautiful countryside location of the Staffordshire Moorlands.

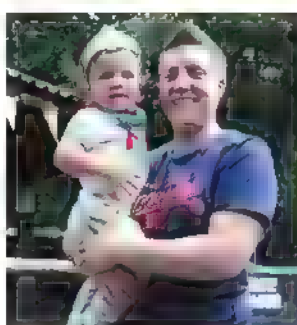
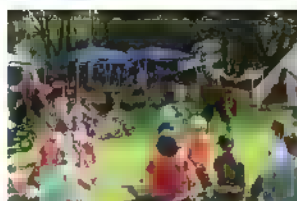
The action-packed weekend is not only full of fun and games, it also provides the perfect atmosphere in which to meet new friends and families from up and down the country.

A full programme of activities has already been announced by the organisers, with an Animal Corner, pizza making, science experiments, pottery classes, circus skills, a treasure hunt, a sports day, storytelling, fancy

dress and a Family Pride's Got Talent event all set to feature. There's also a whole host of live music for everyone to enjoy.

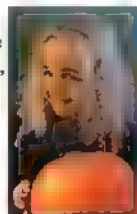
Family Pride takes place at Barnswood Scout Camp, Leek, from Friday 5 to Monday 8 August. Tickets are now on sale from £69 (including a free child ticket).

Visit www.familyprideuk.co.uk for more information.



Fox Cubs is for the kids!

Set up over three years ago, The Fox Cubs is held at award-winning Birmingham gay venue, The Fox.



Growing from just five cubs to over twenty, the group hosts special events for Christmas, Easter, Halloween and days out for activities such as kite flying and picnics. For more information, visit www.thefoxbar.co.uk



Activities and Workshops

- The Cuddly Bear ● Animal Corner ● Pizza Making
- Mug-Cake Baking ● Cake Decorating
- Brainiac Science ● Air Dry Pottery
- Bezerkaz Circus Skills (www.bezerkaz.com)
- Treasure Hunt ● Family Pride Sports Day
- Bracelets & Beaded Bubble Wands ● Storytelling
- Fancy Dress Tent ● Family Pride's Got Talent
- Inflatables ● Abba Night & UV Disco
- My Fun Party Balloons & Magic Show

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The Samsung Galaxy VR transports you to places as if you're actually there. Using your Galaxy smartphone, a wide field of view and precise head-tracking, it brings reality to the virtual. The sleek headset is light and comfortable and with a large touchpad, it's easy and accurate to control.

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02 Samsung Galaxy S7 Edge

The latest and greatest Samsung Galaxy device comes to the market. With a stunning display, great built-in tech and the fantastic Android operating system, you'll have found your next upgrade. And, of course, it works great with the Samsung Galaxy VR.

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03 Roomba Braava

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04 Fossil Q Founder Digital Display Smartwatch

There are plenty of smart watches on offer these days but this one combines fashion and functionality. Powered by Android Wear, this touch-screen smartwatch tracks activity, receives notifications and has customisable watch faces to fit your style.

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www.fossil.co.uk

05 Sonos Playbar

The Sonos Playbar complements your HD TV with highly detailed and textured sound. Using WiFi, it's easy to set up and expand your system over time. It's perfect for the ultimate home cinema set-up.

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If there's still a chill in the air this Spring, this stone knitted crew neck jumper fits the bill. 100% cotton with an all-over textured stitch, it's stylish and functional.

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This grey lightweight bomber jacket features ribbed detailing to both the hem and cuff. With pocket detailing to the front of the garment and a zip-up fastening, style this jacket with a pair of casual jeans and t-shirt for your go-to smart or casual look.

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DVD XENIA (15)

In today's world, is it wise to follow—or even to trust—the white rabbit?

Join Dany and Ody as they journey across the wonderland of 21st century Greece in a quest to find their last living family member—the “unlamentable” father who abandoned them 13 years earlier.

In this hyper-real odyssey, the brothers’ many adventures climax at gunpoint during the Greek X Factor auditions, as they reconnect with one another and attempt to find a sense of belonging in a country that refuses to accept them.

As Athena watched over Jason during his quest for the Golden Fleece, the songs of the pop goddess Patty Pravo guide and protect the boys in their search for the father they never knew. With the stunning Greek landscape as its backdrop, XENIA is a breath of fresh air in the up-and-coming Greek Weird Wave of cinema.



DVD WHAT WE HAVE (18)

What We Have charts the journey of Maurice Lesmiers, a gay actor and teacher who finds himself lost in translation in Northern Ontario. Fleeing from his troubled past in France, Maurice's romantic sense of Canada leads him to seek refuge in a remote community where he discovers little outlet for his Parisian appetite for one-night stands. But things get complicated after he takes a job tutoring French to 15-year-old Alan, a

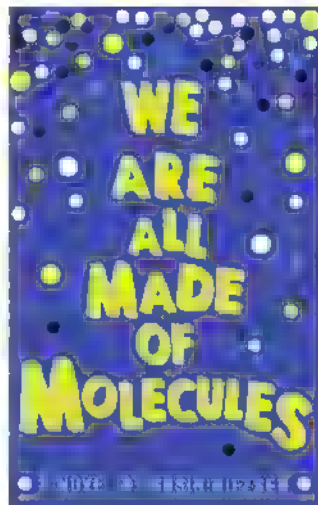
shy student struggling at school—and with his sexuality. When he lands the leading role in a production, Maurice finds himself romantically attracted to the theatre company's charismatic manager, Michael. But their relationship is endangered when Maurice gets caught up in Alan's adolescent world, risking everything to protect his young student, who develops a hard-to-resist attraction for his enigmatic European mentor.

BOOK WE ARE ALL MADE OF MOLECULES by Susan Nielsen

Meet Stewart. He's geeky, gifted and sees things a bit differently to most people. His mum has died, and he misses her all the more now that he and Dad have moved in with Ashley and her mum.

Meet Ashley. She's popular, cool and sees things very differently to her new family. Her dad has come out and moved out—but not far enough. And now she has to live with a freakazoid step-brother.

Stewart can't quite fit in at his new school, and Ashley can't quite get used to her totally awkward home—which is now filled with some rather questionable decor. And things are about to get a whole lot more mixed up when these two very different people attract the attention of school hunk Jared.



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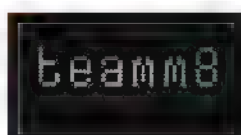


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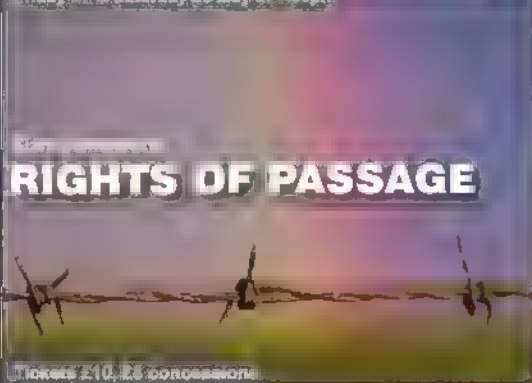
Put your drinks down and your hands together, all the way from Domremy in France (via Sheffield and 600 years) it's **JOAN**. Packed with guts, heart and some well placed coucous, **JOAN** fuses lyrics, new writing with drag king cabaret for the very first time. An earthy story of courage, conviction, hope, survival and love, this is Joan of Arc - quite possibly the world's first drag king. Performed by Drag Idol Champion Lucy Jane Parkinson aka LoUis Cyfer, this is a fearless new show about what it means to stand out, stand up and stand alone.

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You leave your own country in fear of your life because of your sexual orientation. You come to the UK to be free. But here you are - friendless, penniless, jobless, and scared to present yourself to the Home Office in case they don't believe that you're gay - in case they send you back.

Care Summerskill's latest verbatim play offers an intimate revelation of the harrowing and hopeful journeys of lesbian and gay asylum seekers in the UK.

hotlist

THIS MONTH'S HOT EVENTS & THINGS TO SEE AND DO

1 YEARS & YEARS

Barclay Card Arena, Birmingham, Fri 1 Apr

Years & Years - made up by openly gay O'ly, Emre and Mikey - have had a pretty amazing year. Their debut album, *Communion*, reached the album-chart top spot and they enjoyed huge success with singles such as *King* and *Sh.ne*. Off the back of all this, the boys are going out on their biggest tour yet, visiting the Midlands this very month.



2 LEGALLY BLONDE

Curve Theatre, Leicester, Mon 11 Apr - Sat 14 May

The award-winning West End and Broadway smash hit musical is now ready to grace the stage. It's the Curve's brand new production, directed by Nikola Foster.

When the beautiful and popular, forty-year-old Elle Woods gets dumped by boyfriend Warner in a more serious jiffing, she's left with only one logical choice: she packs up her posh car and bags herself a place at the prestigious Harvard Law School. As attempts to win back her man. But what she finds there is so much more.

This witty, fun-filled and top-gross production is about following your dreams and staying true to yourself. In Elle's world, anything is possible and the feelings are true. So grab your tickets today to this must-see show of the season.



3

LADY BOYS OF BANGKOK

The Sabal Pavilion, Derby, Fri 1 - Sat 16 Apr;
Oakengates Theatre, Telford, Tues 19 Apr

Energetic, exotic, eclectic and completely unpredictable, these sensationally glamorous Ladyboys of Bangkok are ready to whoop it up in Britain with a dazzling new production of the country's most popular touring cabaret show, *Forever Yours...X*.



5

JULIAN CLARY

New Alexandra Theatre,
Birmingham, Wed 27 Apr

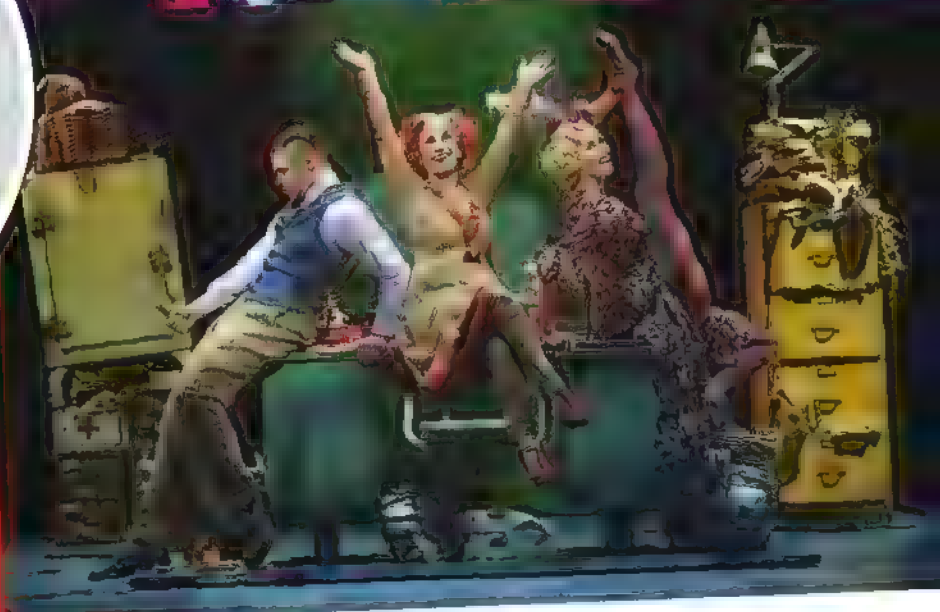
Julian Clary's celebration of 30 years as a camp comedian

The Joy Of Mincing is Julian Clary's celebration of 30 years as a camp comedian - and he has so much to tell you: the ups and downs of his sordid love life; the true and heart-stopping account of how he saved Barbie from oblivion; and please don't mess him on the basis of his DIY electrical home cinema kit.

4

JOE EXCELT

Joe ExceLT is a multi-talented performer who has been a part of the UK's most popular touring cabaret show, *Forever Yours...X*. He is a talented singer, dancer, and actor who has performed in a variety of venues across the country. He is currently performing in the show *Forever Yours...X* at the Sabal Pavilion in Derby.



6

ANNIE

Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton, Mon 4 - Sat 9 April

Birds Of A Feather actress Lesley Joseph stars as the far-from pleasant Miss Hannigan in this latest version of the oft-touring Broadway hit.

The heart warming rags-to-riches tale of a little girl who finds herself transported from a New York orphanage to the luxurious world of millionaire Oliver Warbucks, the show features plenty of memorable songs including *It's A Hard Knock Life* and the legendary *Tomorrow*.

7

MACKLEMORE & RYAN LEWIS

Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham, Sun 24 Apr

Macklemore & Ryan Lewis have announced their first European tour in nearly two years, playing their biggest ever shows on the continent. The 31 date undertaking follows an intimate tour of historic JS theatres in January and February. They stop off at Motorpoint Arena, Nottingham, on Sunday 24 Apr.



8

LITTLE MIX

Genting Arena, Birmingham
Sun 6 Apr; Motorpoint Arena,
Nottingham, Sat 8 Apr

Little Mix are the first girl group to be crowned winners of the X Factor. The group, consisting of Jade Thirlwall, Jesy Nelson, Leigh-Anne Leighton, and Laura-Dawn Carter, have released their debut album, 'Salmon', which has gone platinum. They will be performing live at the Motorpoint Arena in Nottingham on Saturday 8 April.

9

CABARET XXL: DAVID HOYLE

The REP, Birmingham,
Thurs 31 March

Legendary anti-drag queen and
controversial performance artist

David here presents 'polemic, pathos,
provocative politicking, lacerating social com-
mentary and high comedy.'



10 NASTY BABY

Starring Kristen Wiig, Sebastián
Silva, Tunde Adebimpe, Reg E
Cathey, Mark Margolis. Directed by
Sebastián Silva (Chile/USA/France)

Fans of Kristen Wiig will be surprised to find

her in a Chilean American drama, but we
say good on her. She plays the friend of a
gay couple of immigrants living in Brooklyn
who decide to have a baby. She agrees to
carry it - but outside forces conspire to
destroy their world, not least a threat of
deportation and a particularly homophobic
neighbour.

WIN! A pair of weekend camping tickets to L Fest!

The UK's biggest and best lesbian festival, L Fest, returns to Staffordshire this year - and to celebrate the announcement of Heather Peace as its headliner, we've teamed up with the festival to give away a pair of weekend camping tickets worth £200 to one lucky reader!

L Fest takes place from Friday 15 to Monday 18 July at Jitoxeter Race course in Staffordshire and features a whole host of entertainment for all to enjoy. Whether it's live music, cinema, arts, crafts or literature that tickles your fancy, there really is more than enough to keep you

busy!

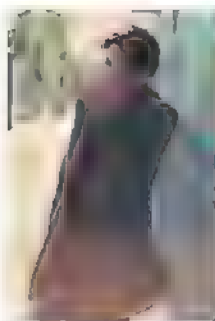
The event is also very welcoming of families, with free tickets for kids under 16. If you're a solo festival-goer, don't worry - L Fest is a great place to make new friends too!

To enter this competition, simply answer the following question at www.midlandszone.co.uk

At which venue is the annual L Fest festival held?

- (A) Uttoxeter Racecourse
- (B) Millennium Dome
- (C) Hyde Park

Good luck!



To enter, simply visit www.midlandszone.co.uk before Saturday 30 April

THE UK'S BIGGEST REGIONAL GAY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

ANDY BELL

READ MIDLANDS-ZONE ON THE GO!

@ WWW.MIDLANDSZONE.CO.UK

WHAT'S ON IN YOUR LOCAL GAY VENUES

OUT

MARCH 2016

GAY CLUBBING IN THE MIDLANDS

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE

MUSCLE BEAR COMEDY

Enjoy an evening with American
Muscle-Bear comedian
Peter Bisulio

DRAG IDOL

The annual Drag Idol contest
returns to the Midlands with
La Voix!

XXL IT'S BACK

The monthly men-only club
night returns to Birmingham's
Core Club this month

Missing EASTER



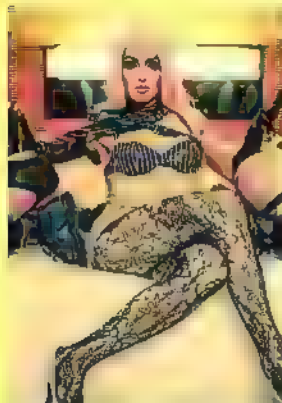
MISSING BAR, 48 BROMSGROVE ST, BIRMINGHAM, B5 0121 622 4256

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGAZNA

FEATURING AMY LAQUEEFA
WITH SPECIAL GUEST CRYSTAL LUBRIKUNT
EASTER EGG TOMBOLA!



From NYC to Birmingham as **BIBLEGIRL666** set to appear at Brum gay super club



New York City drag queen Biblegirl666 is set to enjoy an adventure on our side of the pond this month, when she performs at Birmingham's Nightingale Club.

A queen with big aspirations, Biblegirl666 has a unique style of make-up fashion and performance. She's certainly not a queen to mess with - or to miss! She's live at The Nightingale on Saturday 9 April. Slay it, girl!

THE NIGHTINGALE - BIRMINGHAM

Muscle-bear funny man **PETER BISUITO** comes to Eden Bar

Internationally known 'Muscle-Bear' comedian Peter Bisuito will be performing at Birmingham's Eden Bar on Saturday 30 April.

Peter is a well-known American comedian who travels the world and performs on cruise ships. He's appeared on Oprah and has also been the opening act for Bianca De Ró and De Shores.

Peter comes to Birmingham as part of his European mini-tour

EDEN - BIRMINGHAM



XXL at The Core: The biggest men-only club in Brum

Men-only club night **XXL** returns to Birmingham this month - and it promises to be as good as ever!

Taking place on the third Friday of every month (15 April), the popular clubbing event sees men from across the Midlands come out to play and party!

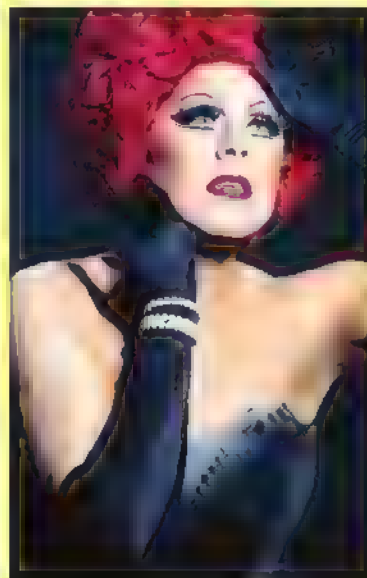
The London club night's Midlands event features XXL's resident DJ, Christian M, playing the best hits and remixes to get the dancefloor packed.

And be sure to check out the dark room upstairs while you're there... Have fun, guys!

THE CORE - BIRMINGHAM



LA VOIX returns to Birmingham to host Drag Idol heats



Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist La Voix returns to Birmingham's Eden Bar twice this month to host the city's Drag Idol heats.

If you've got an urge to become the nation's next favourite drag queen, then this is the competition you need to enter. Pop down to Eden on Thursday 7 and 27 April and strut your stuff on stage. Have you got what it takes to progress to the final?

EDEN - BIRMINGHAM

FRIDAY NIGHT CABARET every week at popular Birmingham bar

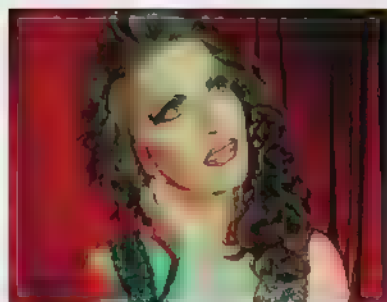
If you're out on a Friday night and looking for great cabaret to enjoy, look no further than Birmingham's Village Inn.

Kicking off the venue's April line-up is Lady Imelda on Friday the 1st. The following week sees Miss Marty dropping in, followed by Topsy Redfern the week after. The penultimate act for the month, Key

Wilde, swings by on Friday the 22nd and then, as per usual, Sandra is back at the end of the month to see you into May!

If you haven't been to a cabaret night at The Village Inn, then you're in for a treat - so pop down one night!

THE VILLAGE INN - BIRMINGHAM



WEDNESDAY

April

4 11 18 25

BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

MINISTRY OF POUND with Du Mike Emery from 9pm Selected drinks £1 Open until 2am
MISSING BAR

CABARET WITH BAGA CHIPZ Every Monday night head down to the Village Inn for a night of fun cabaret with the incredible Baga Chipz. It's not to be missed
THE VILLAGE INN

SUGAR RUSH £2 entry
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

MONDAY MADNESS All day & night
DJ Matt Hadfield
THE LOFT LOUNGE

BAR JESTER

OUTSKIRTS

BAR JESTER

POUNDED Come and get Pounded from 8pm onwards £1
bomb Carling Strongbow
Jambucca
SIDEWALK

WEST MIDLANDS

FABULOUS Fun & Games with resident host Marty (The girl who likes to party) **Mon 4 April** - the return of the fantastic Miss Penny! Free admission before midnight and just £3 after
C:21, SHREWSBURY

THE MONDAY CLUB 9pm-5am Student night Everything is £2 (Shots £1) with DJ Lee Edward
GORGEOUS, WOLVERHAMPTON

CHILL NIGHT with Karaoke
THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

GET THE PARTY STARTED admission With DJ Fox
THE LOFT LOUNGE

GOSSIP, STOKE ON TRENT

STUDENT NIGHT Free drinks £1
THE LOFT LOUNGE

PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

STAFFORDSHIRE

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm for a quiet drink in a friendly
THE LOFT LOUNGE

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

DISCO 7pm-midnight
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

TUESDAY

April

5 12 19 26

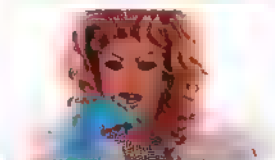
BIRMINGHAM

90'S NIGHT - Every Tuesday night 10.30pm-3am
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

SCREAM ITAN SUPERSTAR With your host karaoke temptress Gavina. Party starts at 9pm till late
MISSING BAR

OPEN YOUR SNATCH Songs, Games & Prizes with Miss Penny
THE VILLAGE INN



TUNE UP TUESDAY

BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

BIG TUESDAY NIGHT PARTY

THE LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

CAMP QUIZ

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

DIVERSITY night, with [redacted]
hina from pop & hip hop to
VELVET, WORCESTER

FLAUNT A night
every night
BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER

SKYE'S PARTY NIGHT

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

TWISTED TUESDAYS Friday
Cherry Darling Open 9pm-3am
RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

EAST MIDLANDS

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm till late

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

CHILL OUT NIGHT Friday
midnight
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM

WARRIS VIBES Friday
Nintendo Wii from 8pm
DOVER CASTLE, LEICESTER

THURSDAY

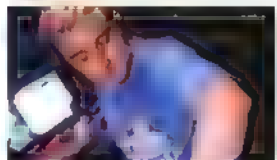
April

6 13 20 27

BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

2 GOOD 2 MISS Drinks from just £2 with Du Mike Emery
MISSING BAR



KILLEN KARAOKE - with Charlotte the Harlot
THE VILLAGE INN

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS

THE LOFT LOUNGE

MADY'S DRINK AND DRINK FUEL Free Pool Or
THE FOX

WACKY WEDNESDAYS

BAR JESTER

WEDNESDAY LINE Line Dancin
night
THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

DISCO & DJ with C
RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

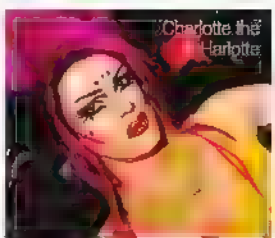
STUDENT LINE NIGHT DJs drink
THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

WACKY WEDNESDAYS Karaoke & games open 9pm-midnight
RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

EAST MIDLANDS

KARAOKE 9pm til 3am. £2 drinks from 8pm til 11pm. Free Entry
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

GAMES NIGHT Friday
Drinks from 8pm
Jackpot & D
NEW FORESTERS, NOTTINGHAM



FRIDAY

April

7 14 21 28

BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
THE LOFT LOUNGE

CHARLIE HIDES Thurs 3 Mar Award winning cabaret artist YouTube sensation and man of 1,000 faces
EDEN

CULT Bringing dirty house back home Top Floor from 10pm
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

1 < 3 THE 90S From 8pm with DJ Dan Doors open from 2pm
EDEN

LA VOIX Thurs 7 & 28 Apr Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist live on stage at Eden, hosting Drag do! Great vocal talents combined with hilarious comedy make for a great night out
EDEN

POUNDED £5 entry Drinks from a £1 Du Corey playing chart and dance on whilst Miss Marty and Du Craig with all the pop and cheese on the middle floor
NIGHTINGALE CLUB

TANGO THURSDAYS with Marty Happy Hour 12noon-2am
THE VILLAGE INN

THROWBACK THURSDAY £1.20 bombs and great music
MIMING

DROP THE BOMB start
excluding
our resident
SIDEWALK

THE LOFT LOUNGE [redacted]
with random music
have the prices put

THE CORE

WEST MIDLANDS

12.01 with Du James Levett Open from Midnight until 5am with drinks from £1
GORGEOUS, WOLVES

THE KARAOKE LOUNGE Free entry
Big value drinks
THE LION, WALSALL

DISCO & DJ All day
Plus Glamour
THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

EAST MIDLANDS

2 TILL 2 Open from 2pm till 2am for a quiet drink
THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON



XXL BIRMINGHAM

SATURDAY 26th MARCH

10PM 11AM MEMBERS ENIGUESTS 10

SPECIAL GUEST DJ PAUL MORRELL

THE CORE

135 SHERLOCK ST, BIRMINGHAM

XXL-LONDON.COM



2-4-1 COCKTAILS

SUNDAY -FRIDAY
ALL DAY AND NIGHT

f loft.birmingham

🐦 @loftlounge2

📷 loftbirmingham

0121 622 2444

April



BIRMINGHAM

2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS - Sunday to Friday All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two

THE LOFT LOUNGE

ALL DAY EVERY DAY PRICES DJ Pam, takes over the weekend by playing the best of club classics, house R&B and all your favourites. Enjoy all day every day prices too!

SIDEWALK

BIG GAY FRIDAY Party anthems all night long with Missing's DJ James. Open until the early hours

SING STAR SUPERSTAR WITH DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikki

EDEN BAR

FREAKY FRIDAY Big name cabaret at midnight. Open until 6am. **Fri 1 Apr** Lady Imelda **Fri 8 Apr** Miss Marty **Fri 15 Apr** Topsy Redfern **Fri 22 Apr** Kelly White **Fri 29 Apr** Sandra

THE VILLAGE INN

INFUSION Free Entry. Absolute Anthems and Floor Fillers with DJ Corey. Drinks from £2. £2 entry

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

KICK START Kick start the weekend from 9pm til the early hours. Hosted by James

MISSING'S

LBR With Charlotte the Harlotte. Open until 6am every Friday

THE VILLAGE INN

MIDBEARS - Fri 15 Apr - Monthly meet up and social group for Bears and Admirers with special drinks offers all night

EDEN BAR

LIP GLOSS - Fri 1 Apr - A night for the trans* community, admirers and friends

EDEN BAR

OLD SKOOL GARAGE The first Friday of the month sees the Nightingale go back in time playing some of the best old skool garage. A night not to be missed

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

SAATHI - Fri 29 Apr - Every last Friday monthly South Asian Gay and Lesbian club night. Bollywood and Bhangra

NIGHTINGALE CLUB

SING STAR SUPERSTAR with DJ Nikki every Friday - your chance to win cash

EDEN BAR

VINTAGE FRIDAYS a night of soul, funk, rock, motown, Northern Soul and all the classic favourites

THE LOFT LOUNGE

XXL - Fri 15 Apr - Men only night with DJ Christian M. Early Bear offers until 11pm. Every 3rd Friday of each month

THE CORE CLUB

Club City

KARAOKE Come

to start your

THE FOX

RETRO FRIDAY R

DJ M

BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

YOLO! Gorgeous residents spinning house and classics. Earlybird drinks from £1.50 with free entry before 11pm. 10.30pm - 5.30am

GORGEOUS CLUB, WOLVERHAMPTON

BANG

THE LION, WALSBALL

TV PARTY NIGHT A Men

Admirers. Every night at

THE GREENHOUSE, DARLSTON

CLUB NIGHT Drink prices

THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

PINK ENTIRE FRIDAYS

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

FRIDAY SOCIAL

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

WEEKLY CABARET with DJ Sk

Open at 12.30am. Open

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

START THE WEEKEND Fri

Open before 11pm. T

PINK, STONE ON TRENT

TFI FRIDAY A fun a

current cha

BREWERY TAP, WORCESTER

EAST MIDLANDS

PINK POUNDER Every Friday night

with DJ Snuckies. £8 entry. £1

drinks. Open 9pm-4.30am

THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON

HELINKI, LEICESTER

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XXL LONDON

WEDNESDAYS 10PM - 3AM
SATURDAYS 10PM - 8AM
PULSE
No 1 INVICTA PLACE SE1 9UF

WWW.XXL-LONDON.COM

BIRMINGHAM

3RD FRIDAY EVERY MONTH
9PM - 3AM
THE CORE
135 SHERLOCK ST, BIRMINGHAM

FACEBOOK.COM/XXLLONDON

BIRMINGHAM

80S HITS with DJ Dan from 2am til 5am. It's back to the 80s
Eden Bar

THE ATTIC Available for hire. Call the venue for more info 0121 622 4256
Nightingale Club

BEARBRUM - Sat 9 Apr - A night for Bears, their friends and admirers
Eden Bar

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Over 2 floors, 3 DJs. Open til 8am. With DJ Lotty & DJ Richard Moon. With DJ Tonie in The Village Underground
The Village Inn

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT Every Saturday, with loads of drinks promotions
Nightingale Club

CULT Bringing dirty house back home. Top Floor from 10pm
Nightingale Club

LA VOIX - Sat 16 Apr - Britain's Got Talent semi-finalist live on stage at Eden with fantastic cabaret as well as hosting the Birmingham Bulls RFC kit launch
Eden Bar

KARAOKE & COCKTAILS in The Attic, plus music from across the

decades
Missing

BIBLEGIRL666 - Sat 9 Apr - Live appearance from Celebrity Big Brother star Tiffany Polard
The Nightingale

LBR With Charlotte the Harlotte. Open until 8am every Saturday
The Village Inn

LISA Q JONES - Sat 23 Apr - Live cabaret with Lisa Q Jones - cousin of Laquisha Jones
Eden Bar

MARY MAC & PETER BISUITO - Sat 30 Apr - Live cabaret with Mary Mac and debut from Muscie-Bear comedian Peter Bisuito
Eden Bar

SATURDAY SESSIONS With DJ Simon Baker from 8pm
The Loft Lounge

SATURS-FACTION Welcome in the weekend with resident DJ playing the best of everything
Eden Bar

SWAGGERLICIOUS Every Saturday night (Room 4)
Nightingale Club

YOUR DISCO NEEDS YOU featuring the biggest remixes, absolute anthems, dance classics, disco house and commercial with your host 'Twiggy'

Missing

THE BREAKFAST CLUB E

CLUB CHIC

FABULOUS SATURDAYS Get in

MUSIC CLUB

THE CORE CLUB

DI PARTY NIGHT

THE FOX

#JUST SAYING Get in the party

BAR JESTER

KARAOKE Every Sat night

THE WELLINGTON

WEST MIDLANDS

SLAG 10pm-6am. Earlybird drinks from £1.50. DJ Paul Bryant, James Levett & Josh B. Plus weekly guests
Gorgeous, Wolverhampton

BIG NIGHT OUT E

THE LION, WALSALL

CLUB NIGHT Drink promos until 4h. Free entry before 11pm

THE THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

BIG SATURDAY NIGHT OUT C

RAINBOWS, COVENTRY

INCLUSION with Birmingham & UK DJ

THE BELL, STOURBRIDGE

NOT TO MISS F

PINK, STOKE ON TRENT

WEEKLY CABARET with E

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

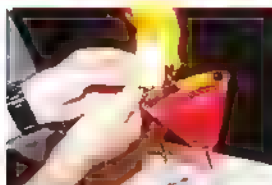
EAST MIDLANDS

BIG WEEKEND PARTY NIGHT 10pm til 6am. Free entry before 11pm. £3 before 1am and £5 after. **THE BOSTON, NORTHAMPTON**

CLUB NIGHT E

HE S'NKI, LEICESTER

BIRMINGHAM



2 FOR 1 COCKTAILS Sunday to Friday. All day & night. Wind down after work with a cocktail or two
The Loft Lounge

SING STAR SUPERSTAR WITH DISCO & KARAOKE with DJ Nikko. Every Sunday
Eden Bar

LOCAL CABARET with Charlotte the Harlotte. Showcasing the best of the Midlands cabaret circuit every Sunday
The Village Inn

MISS PENNY'S SUPERSIZE SUNDAYS Cabaret every Sunday hosted by the one and only Miss Penny on stage at 8.30pm and 10.30pm
Miss Penny

SUPER SUNDAY DINNER

SEAWALK

CHILL OUT Look at

THE FOX

SATURDAY IS FRIDAY E

BAR JESTER

WEST MIDLANDS

MARTY'S PARTY 9pm-4am. Fun & Games. Karaoke. Prizes and a round mayhem. Drinks from £2
Gorgeous, Wolverhampton

THE PARTY LOUNGE R

CHILL OUT Drag host and

LION BAR & CLUB, WALSALL

KARAOKE & DJ A night of fun with

THE WHITE HART, WOLVERHAMPTON

THREE FURNACES, TELFORD

EAST MIDLANDS

BRUNCH CLUB Brunch with

RAINBOW & DOVE, LEICESTER

HATE DOESN'T BELONG HERE

DISABILITY

RACE

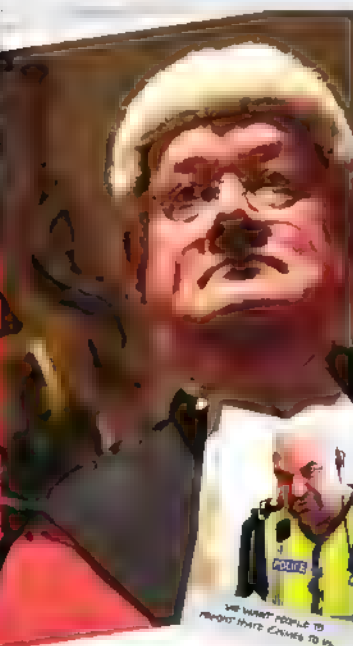
RELIGION

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

TRANSGENDER

REPORT IT

WWW.REPORT-IT.ORG.UK



HATE CRIMES CAN RECEIVE HARSHER SENTENCES

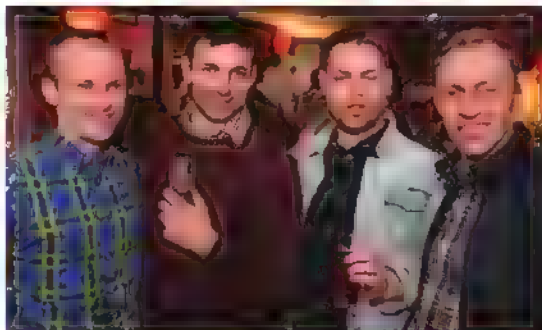
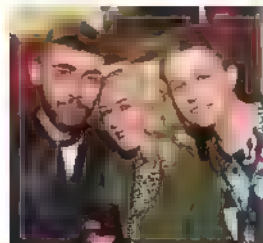
STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE
LEAST VIOLENCE
Ministry of JUSTICE

CALL YOUR LOCAL POLICE
101

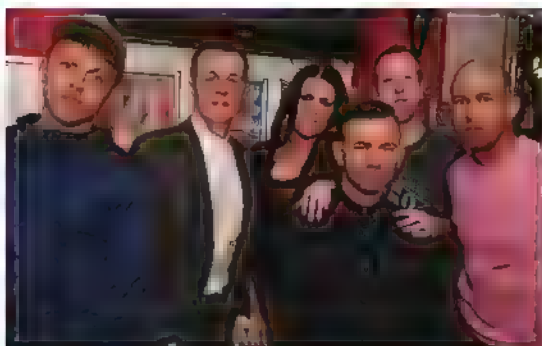
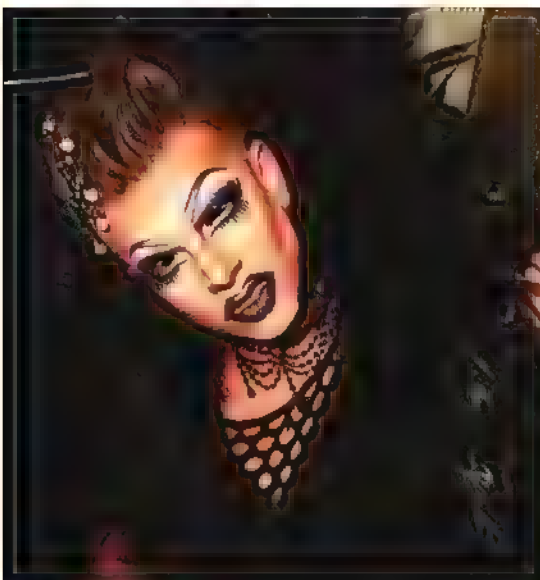
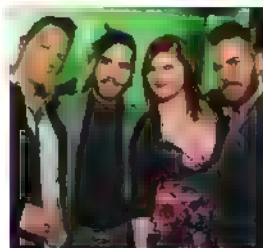
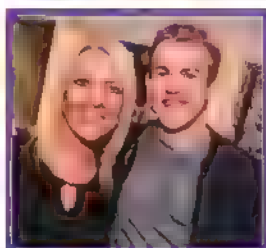
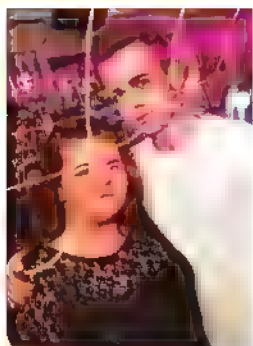


WWW.REPORT-IT.ORG.UK

Birmingham's party people always head to **Missing!**

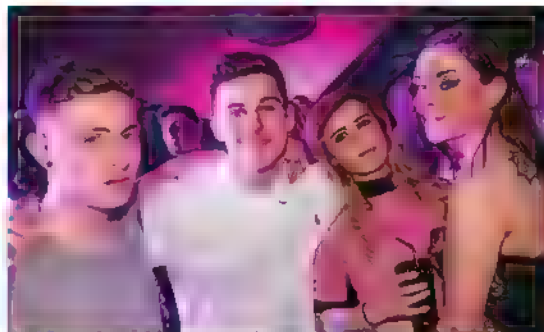
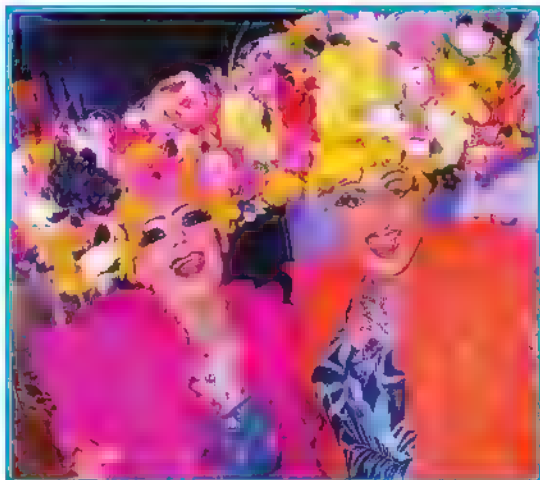


More great photos on **facebook**
facebook.com/midlandszone.co.uk



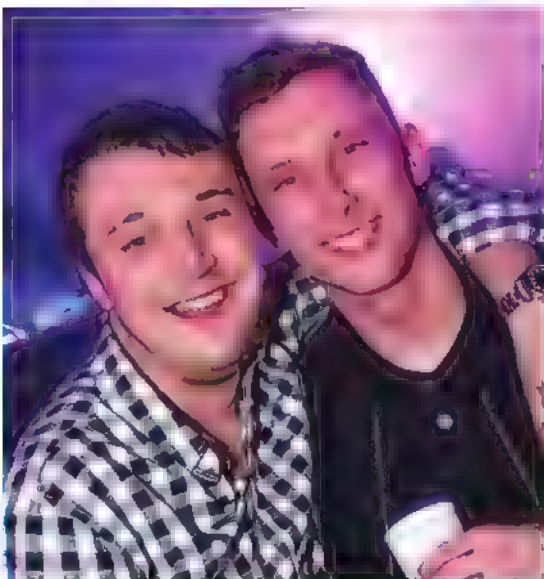
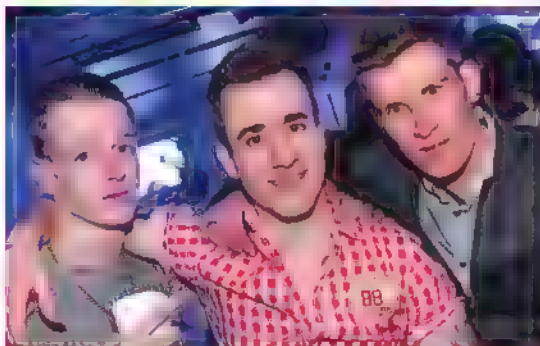
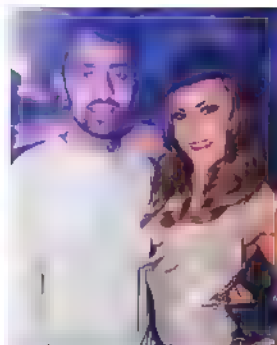
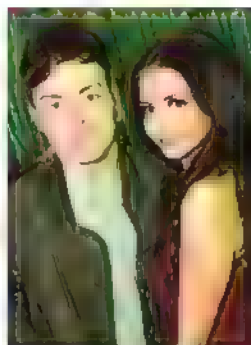
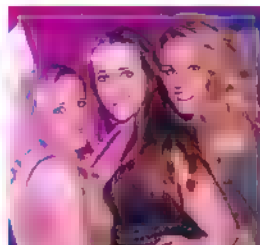
Pictures by Laura Byrne

There's a great night out to be had at **Gorgeous!**



More great photos on **facebook**

www.facebook.com/midlandszone

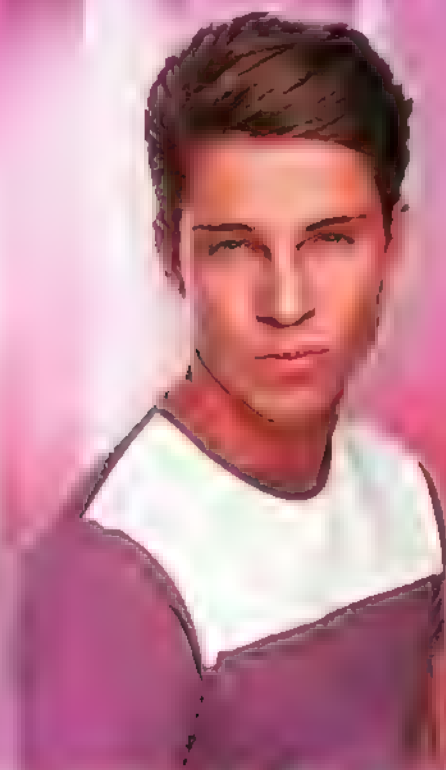


Pictures by Jonathan Azaopari



SUNDAY 29TH MAY

THE BIGGEST REALITY STAR OF THEM ALL!



JOEY ESSEX

**LIVE
AT**

GORGEOUS

FROM 1AM

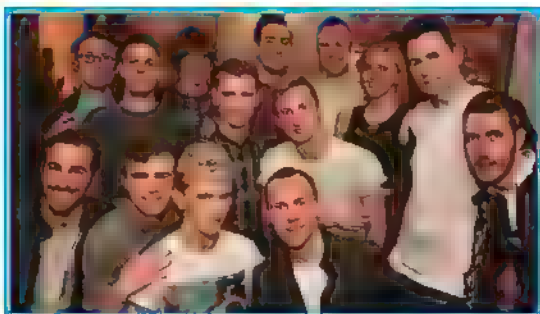
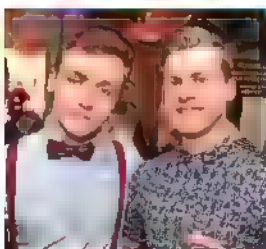
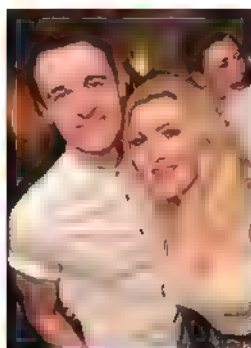
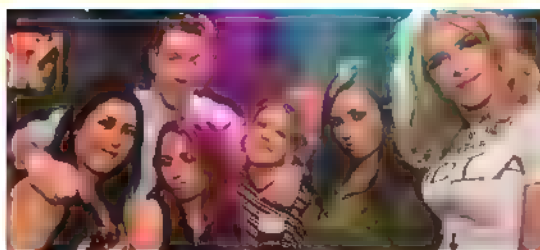
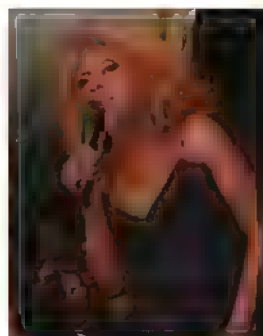
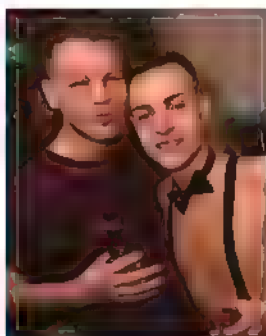
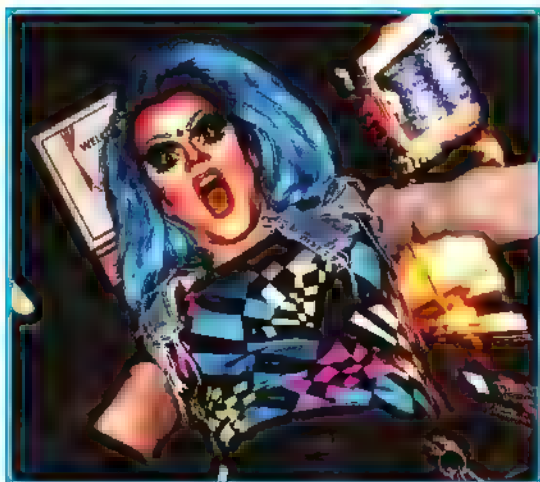
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drinkaware.co.uk
for the facts

The Village Inn: The kings of cabaret in Birmingham



THE VILLAGE INN

April

Lady Imelda
FRIDAY 1ST

Miss Marty
FRIDAY 8TH

Topsie Redfern
FRIDAY 15TH

Kelly Wilde
FRIDAY 22ND

Sandra
LAST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

L O R

FRIDAY TILL 8AM SATURDAY TILL 8AM



VILLAGEINNBIRMINGHAM

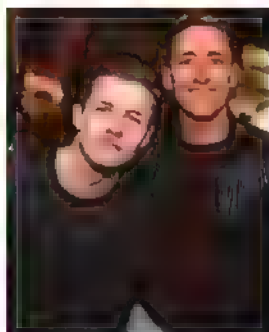
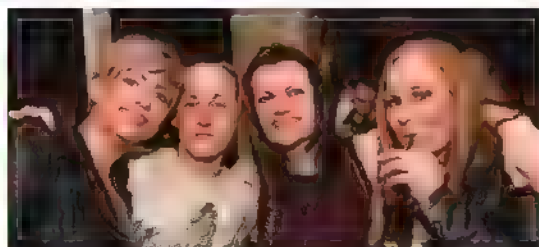


@VILLAGEBRUM

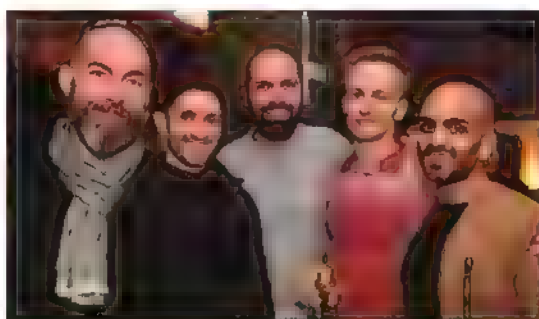
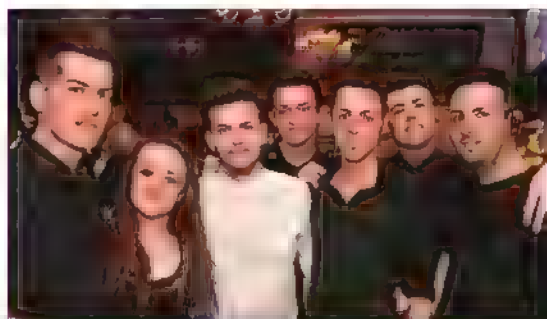
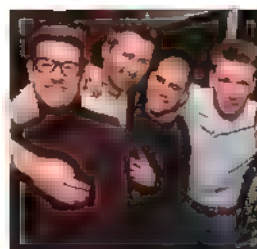
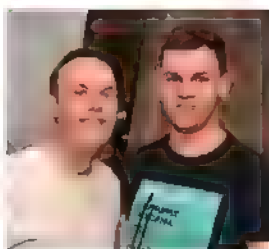
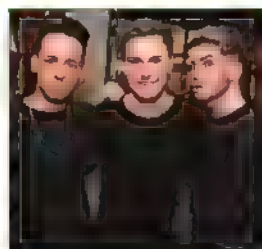
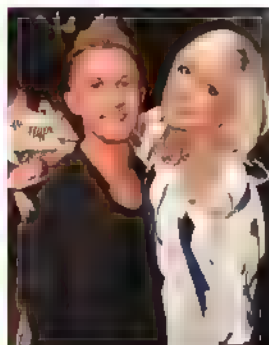
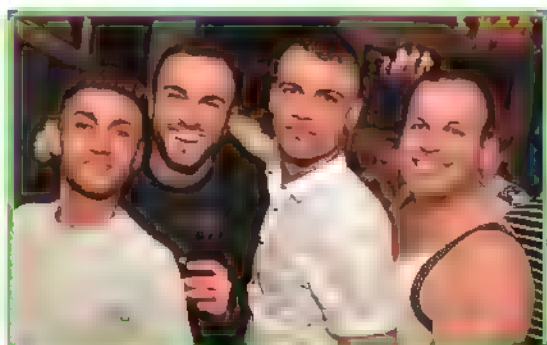


THEVILLAGEBIRMINGHAM

The Loft Lounge: A sexy, chic and stylish night out!

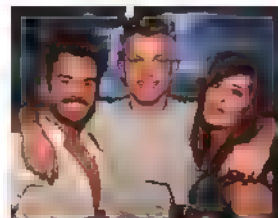
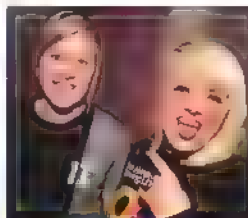
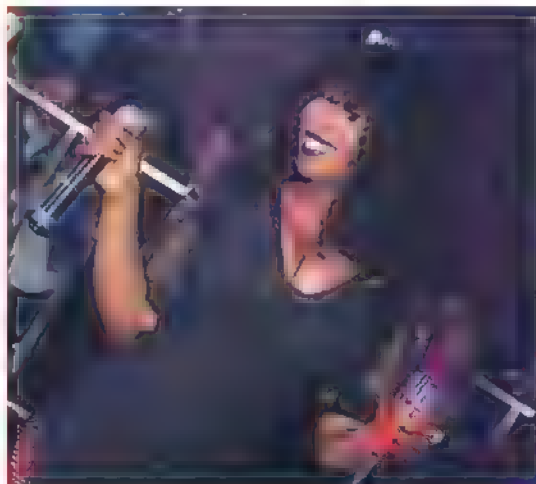


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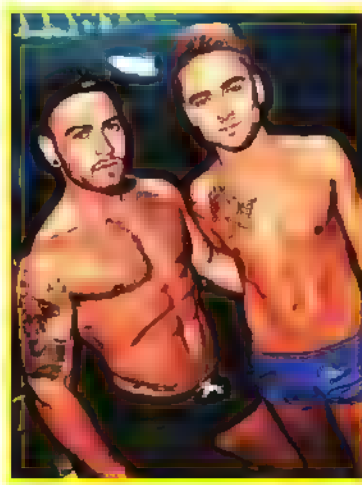
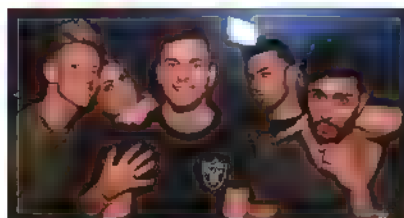
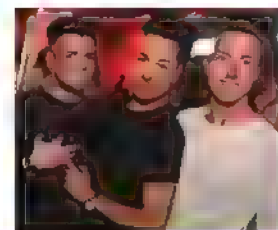
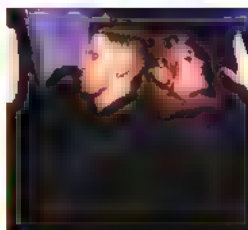
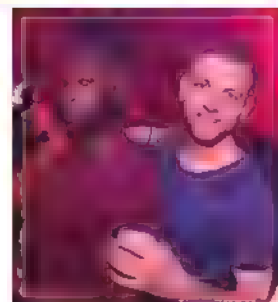


Gloucester Lawns, Byre

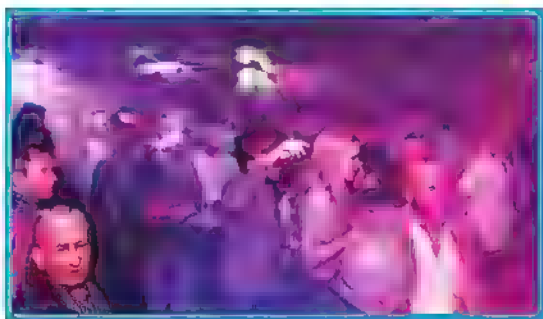
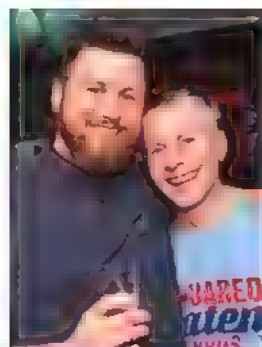
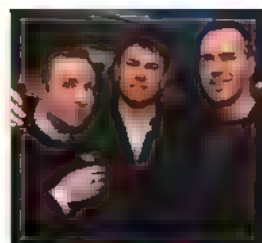
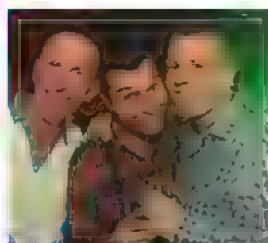
Tiffany Pollard slays at The Nightingale Club



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2000E
 READERS' AWARDS

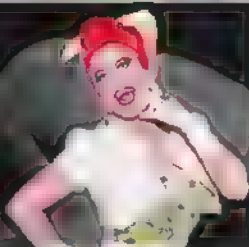
We are overwhelmed with the results of this year's Midlands Zone Readers' Awards. We have a fantastic team at Eden that all work so hard. Your votes really do mean a lot to us all. Thank you. x

FRI
1st
Lip Gloss

with your host MISS PENNY!

 Cabaret from
 Fabulous Miss TANYA HYDE

STRIPPER
EXTREME

THUR
7th

Drag Idol UK 2016
La Voix

10pm

Can you sing? Can you dance? Can you tell a joke? Are you a talented impersonator, maybe a juggler or even a puppeteer? In or out of drag, we want to hear from you! Are you an alternative act needing a break? Come and show us what you've got? 2016 could be your year.

SAT
9th


We're back with another fantastic Men-Only Night in the Marquee One of Eden's most popular regular events.

FRI
15th
MIDSBEARS

Mids Bears Monthly Meet
 in the Marquee Special
 Drinks Offers All Night

ZONE

 Winner - Best Midlands
 Gay Venue for Men

SAT
16th

La Voix

BIRMINGHAM BULLS NEW KIT LAUNCH!


SAT
23RD
Lisa Q Jones
Lisa Q Jones
THURS
28TH
La Voix &

10pm

Drag Idol UK 2016
ZONE
 READERS' AWARDS

Best Midlands
 Bar for Men
 Best Midlands
 Front of House Team
 Best Midlands
 Front of House Person
 Best Birmingham
 Gay Bar
 Best Birmingham
 Overall Gay Venue
 Best Midlands
 Bar DJ - DJ Dan
 Best Midlands
 LGBT Sport or
 Social Group
 Birmingham Bulls
 Best National Cabaret
 La Voix
 Best Midlands
 Security Person
 Jermaine Holder

SAT 30th
MARY MAC &
Muscle-Bear Comedian,
PETER BISUITO

Peter is a well-known American Comedian who travels the world and performs on cruise ships. His comedy was briefly seen on Oprah and he was the opening act for Bianca Del Rio

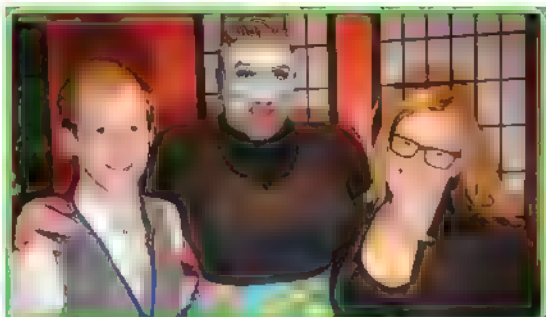
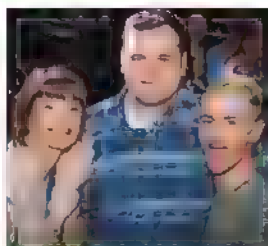
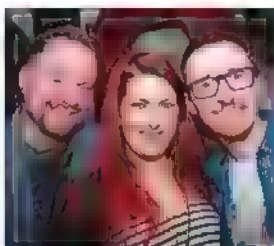
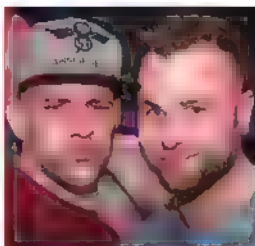
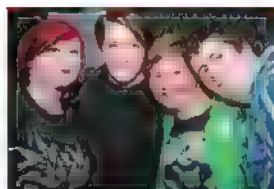
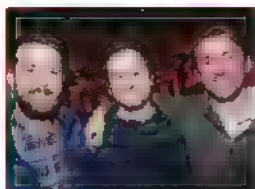
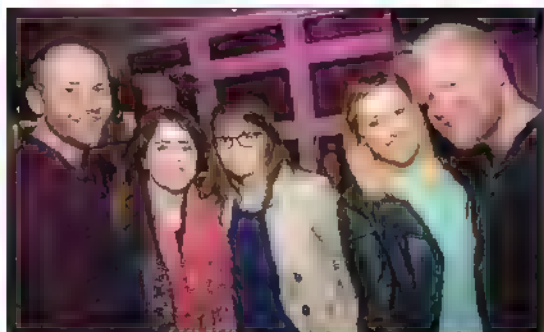
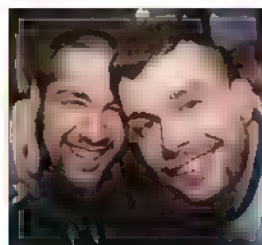
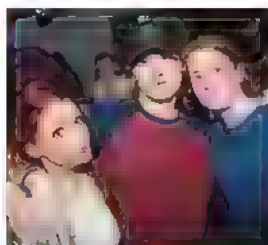
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 ALL THE CLASSIC
 HITS


Danny Beard raises the roof at Shrewsbury's C:21



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Pictures by Clive Padden

THE BIGGEST GAY MONDAY NIGHT IN THE MIDLANDS!



**MON 4TH APRIL
MISS PENNY**

**FREE
ENTRY
BEFORE
MIDNIGHT!
10PM-3AM**



**MON 2ND MAY
TINA SPARKLE**

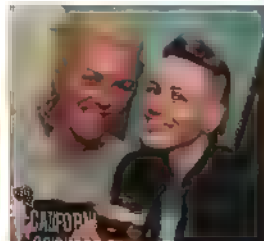
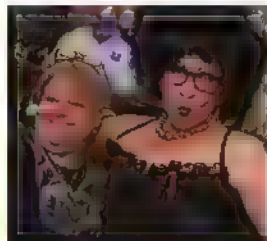
Fabulous

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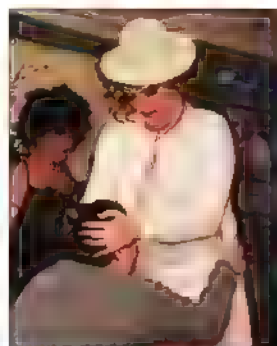
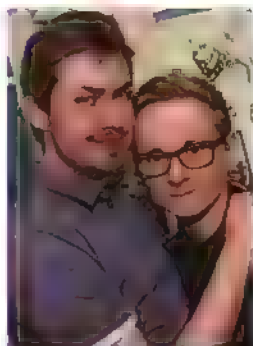
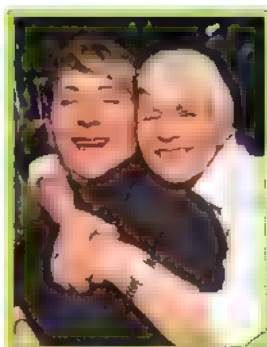
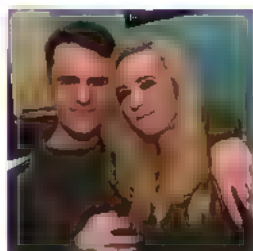
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See pictures on page 56

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See pictures on page 55

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See pictures on page 52

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month y 7 Windsor St
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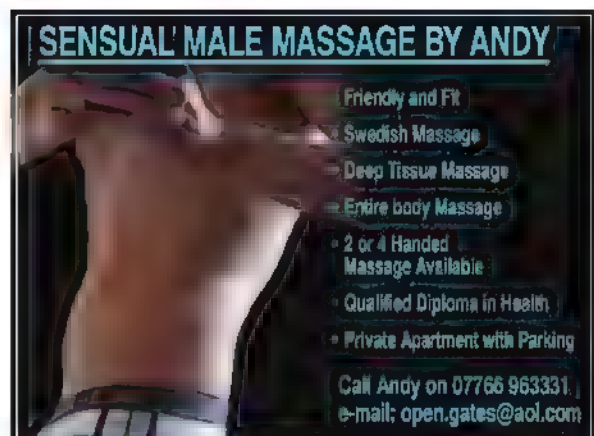
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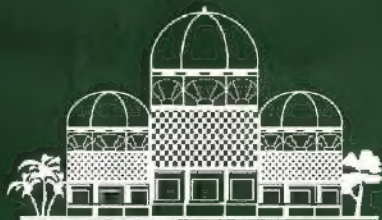
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THE EDITOR'S NOTE by Ryan Humphreys

We are family...

A very warm welcome to the April edition of Midlands Zone magazine. As an anonymous scribe once wrote, 'Spring has sprung, the grass is riz' - which pretty much means it's time to start getting ready for this year's Birmingham Pride festival!



A Generation Of Pride Family focus

After last year's hugely successful event, the Midlands gay scene is now gearing up for 2016's sure-to-be-fun festivities, taking place over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend of Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 May.

This year's festival features all of Birmingham Pride's well-established favourites, from the Carnival Parade and Main Stage through to the Cabaret Marquee and Women's Arena.

The festival's theme, A Generation Of Pride, will be celebrating the pivotal, hard-fought achievements of the LGBT community over the last 20 years. These milestones include an equal age of consent, civil partnerships, the right to serve in the military, the right for trans people to legally change their gender, marriage for lesbian, gay and bisexual couples, and equal adoption rights for same-sex couples. The UK also enjoys the highest LGBT representation of any parliament in the world.

So why not make sure that you come together with the rest of the Midlands gay community by getting along to this year's festival - it's gonna be a weekend to remember...

Have a quick browse through this issue of Zone and you'll see that there are items on the Family Pride festival, the rewards of fostering and the issue of fertility. We've long been looking for a chance to celebrate the modern-day relevance of 'family' to LGBT people and couples, so we're pleased to have been able to give the subject some column inches this month.



Calling all writers...

Finally - and following on from a similar end-of-column message last month - we're currently on the look out for creative and passionate writers to pen a monthly column for Midlands Zone magazine, both in print and online. This is a great opportunity for your work to be viewed by over 50,000 readers across the country. Get in touch if you think you've got what it takes!



ON THE BALL with Steve Ball

Hope Not Hate

Two events happened last month that made me smile. Both involved black Americans. But both were very different.

The first was Virginia McLaurin, a 106-year-old woman who proved she has more energy than most people half her age when she danced her way into the White House to meet the President. Unable to contain her excitement at meeting Barack and Michelle Obama, she held her arms in the air and danced excitedly when introduced to the President and First Lady. The special guest was invited to the White House as part of Black History Month celebrations and told the Obamas: "I am so happy to have a black president... and I'm here to celebrate black history".

The second event concerns Reverend James Manning, chief pastor at the ATLAH World Missionary Church in Harlem, New York City. He takes a very different view of the US president, likening Barack Obama to Hitler. Among other accusations, he called Obama "a Taliban Muslim", his mother "white trash" and, in 2014, predicted that Obama and Vladimir Putin would be outed as gay within 100 days. But while Manning has been preaching hate, his unpaid bills and taxes have left him \$1.02million in debt. His church was due to be sold at public auction in February.

But Obama is not the sole target of Manning's hatred. He's not too keen on gays either, calling for homosexuals to be stoned to death, for Harlem to be a "homo-free zone" and claimed that Starbucks puts semen in its coffees. Messages outside his church state that 'Jesus would stone homos' and that all supporters of LGBT people should be cursed with cancer, HIV, madness and eternal damnation.

But this month, this particular story may take a different turn. The Ali Forney Center (AFC), just around the corner from the Atiah Church, announced that it's raising funds in an attempt to purchase the building, in order to provide housing for LGBT youths and a catering business run and operated by its clients.

"Ali Forney, who inspired the founding of the organisation, was murdered in Harlem in 1997, only 12 blocks from ATLAH," said Carl Siciliano, Executive Director and Founder of the Ali Forney Center. "In 2013, Islan Nettles was beaten to death in Harlem only one mile from ATLAH. Could there be a more just outcome to the ATLAH foreclosure than that the young LGBT people most endangered by the hatred and contempt Manning promotes would take over his building?"

Since January, over 3,000 individuals have donated a total of \$315,000 to the Harlem No Hate campaign. A judge has granted a stay of the sale of the church until 21 April, providing AFC with more time to raise additional funds to buy the building and dedicate it to a centre of hope, not hate.

Now that would be a happy ending.

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